

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A A 001 431 029 6



G.H. Holloway 15





THE STAR FIELDS  
AND OTHER POEMS



# THE STAR FIELDS AND OTHER POEMS

BY

WILLOUGHBY WEAVING

LATE SCHOLAR OF PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD, AND LIEUTENANT  
IN THE ROYAL IRISH RIFLES

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

ROBERT BRIDGES

Oxford

B. H. BLACKWELL, BROAD STREET

MCMXVI

SR

PRINTED BY  
HAZELL, WATSON AND VINEY, LTD.,  
LONDON AND AYLESBURY.

TO

ROBERT BRIDGES,

WITH ALL THE GRATITUDE THAT I CAN,

AND ALL THE AFFECTION THAT I MAY,

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK.



## INTRODUCTION

THE many readers who will find delight in these poems will care very little for my preface; but the publisher has asked me for a few words of introduction. By the side of poems alive with spontaneity and imaginative beauty I must exhibit a patch of prose which can only betray the trouble that its writing gives me; for, since my praise would surely be impertinent to the poet, and my judgment to the reader, there is nothing for me to say but what is printed on the title-page, that these poems are the poems of Mr. Willoughby Weaving.

In the first and last numbers of the volume the author has offered some revelation of himself: and I fear lest I may be plunging into indiscretions if I venture to add this personal item, that he sent me some poems a few years ago, while yet an undergraduate at Oxford, and ever since that day has had my sympathy and encouragement. I took one of the lyrics from his first book into my Anthology,

## INTRODUCTION

"The Spirit of Man," and have wondered that nothing of his has appeared in any of the numerous collections of recent verse; neither in the "Georgian Poetry," nor in the books of "Oxford Poetry," nor even among the "War-Poems," although there can scarcely have been a more genuine and prolific poet in the trenches; where he did well, until, invalidated home in 1915, he was safely restored to his Country Muse, to whose protection I very humbly and confidently commend him.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

*August 1916.*

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
APOLOGY . . . . .	I
TO MEMORY: AN ODE . . . . .	3
THE CHOICE OF ACHILLES . . . . .	9
BETWEEN THE TRENCHES . . . . .	13
THE BEE . . . . .	15
GHOSTS (FLANDERS, 1915) . . . . .	16
L. O. AND K. R., KILLED IN ACTION, SEPTEMBER 25, 1915 . . . . .	17
THE NAIAD. . . . .	18
C.'S FRAGMENTS . . . . .	23
LIFE: AN EPIGRAM . . . . .	24
SONG . . . . .	25
ANCILLA DOMINI . . . . .	26
THE BIRTH OF CHRIST . . . . .	29
RUTH: ABBESS . . . . .	31
NAIAD'S SONG . . . . .	40
LOVE (LATE AUTUMN, 1912) . . . . .	42

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
TO CAPTAIN GREWAR . . . . .	43
EPITHALAMIUM . . . . .	45
CYPRIAN . . . . .	46
LUCRETIUS' DREAM . . . . .	47
HECTOR . . . . .	48
SHELLEY'S HEART . . . . .	49
THE LOST MISTRESS . . . . .	50
DIANA OF THE TEMPEST . . . . .	52
MEDUSA AWAKE . . . . .	53
SUNSET . . . . .	54
INTERLUDE. . . . .	55
ACRISIUS . . . . .	56
THE MAN AND THE STATUE . . . . .	57
THE DOVE . . . . .	62
SIN . . . . .	63
PHILOSOPHY . . . . .	64
RUBRICS . . . . .	65
SUNSHOWER (FROM " THE OPIUM-EATER ") . . . . .	66
SONG . . . . .	67
TO OSWALD COULDREY . . . . .	68
WINTER . . . . .	69
TO K. R. . . . .	70
ZOE . . . . .	71

## CONTENTS xi

	PAGE
THE MAKING . . . . .	72
INSOMNIA . . . . .	74
THE CALL . . . . .	75
FLANDERS, 1915. . . . .	76
RECOLLECTIONS . . . . .	77
OLD AGE . . . . .	78
TO SPRING: AN ODE . . . . .	79
ST. JOHN . . . . .	82
THE RAINBOW . . . . .	84
THE UNJEALOUS GOD . . . . .	86
PRIVILEGE . . . . .	88
ST. C. . . . .	89
" THAT HE BE DRAD " . . . . .	90
THE STAR FIELDS . . . . .	91
THE STREAM O' DOON . . . . .	94
DREAMS . . . . .	95
THE WOODMAN . . . . .	98
MY MOTHER . . . . .	99
THE VALLEY OF DESOLATION . . . . .	100
TO DESPAIR: AN ODE . . . . .	101
BOAR'S HILL . . . . .	104
THE STRINGLESS LYRE. . . . .	109
QUICUNQUE VULT . . . . .	112

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
SEA-RUNE . . . . .	114
ITHURIEL . . . . .	116
VENITE . . . . .	118
OCH HONE ! . . . . .	119
COULOIR: SNOW TEMPTATION . . . . .	121
THE BOXWOOD CUP . . . . .	123
GRACE . . . . .	134
TO MUSIC . . . . .	135
SONG FROM "LIFE" . . . . .	137
THE DREAM . . . . .	138
THE SEA . . . . .	139
HE: A RIME OF PARALLELS . . . . .	140
CREATION DAYS . . . . .	141
SATURN . . . . .	144
THE SLEEPER . . . . .	147
TO K. R., KILLED IN ACTION, SEPTEMBER 25, 1915 . . . . .	151
EPIGRAM . . . . .	155
 SONNETS :	
I. CICERO . . . . .	156
II. VIRGIL . . . . .	157
III. BATTLE . . . . .	158

## CONTENTS

xiii

SONNETS—*continued*:

	PAGE
IV. WINTER . . . . .	159
V. REVIVAL . . . . .	160
VI. THE WIDOW . . . . .	161
VII. NIGHTFALL . . . . .	162
VIII. FULL MOON . . . . .	163
IX. SELF'S MIDDLEMAN . . . . .	164
X. TO . . . —I . . . . .	165
XI. TO . . . —II . . . . .	166
XII. PROTEUS . . . . .	167
XIII. RETROSPECT . . . . .	168
XIV. THOUGHT . . . . .	169
XV. FROM . . . TO . . . —I . . . . .	170
XVI. FROM . . . TO . . . —II . . . . .	171
XVII. STRAYS . . . . .	172
XVIII. MY MOTHER . . . . .	173

## TWO SONNETS TO RUPERT BROOKE:

XIX. I—APOLLO THE GOD . . . . .	174
XX. II—APOLLO THE SEER . . . . .	175
XXI. SUNSET . . . . .	176
BOUSTROPHEDON . . . . .	177
APRIL . . . . .	178
VIOLETS . . . . .	180

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE RING-DOVE . . . . .	181
THE RED-BLACK ROSE . . . . .	183
CORYDON : L. O., KILLED IN ACTION SEPTEMBER 25, 1915 . . . . .	184
ARIEL . . . . .	192
THE SEASONS (DEADMAN'S SONG FROM "LIFE") . . . . .	195
DELIGHT IN CHILDREN . . . . .	198
EPISTLE TO — . . . . .	199
TITHONUS . . . . .	206
THE BREEZE AND THE FEATHER . . . . .	207
VIGNETTE BETWEEN TWO FINGERS . . . . .	210
APOCALYPSE . . . . .	211
THE TOURNEY'S END . . . . .	212
EPITAPH . . . . .	214
FORTUNE'S WHEEL . . . . .	215
OLDMAN'S SONG (FROM "LIFE") . . . . .	217
THE ANCIENT HARPER OF ABINGDON . . . . .	218
WEEPING-WILLOWS . . . . .	223
THE MAD HARPER OF HOLYCLEUGH . . . . .	224
CONFESSORIAL (A FRAGMENT FROM "LIFE") . . . . .	227
FRAGMENT TO BEAUTY . . . . .	228
TURNED WOMAN . . . . .	230
LOVER'S SONG (FROM "LIFE") . . . . .	232

## CONTENTS

xv

PAGE

" SUNSET AND EVENING STAR, AND AFTER THAT THE DARK "	.	.	.	.	.	234
INTERLUDE	.	.	.	.	.	235
MIRIAM	.	.	.	.	.	236
THE THUMPING	.	.	.	.	.	237
DOGGED (HEREDITY'S SONG FROM " LIFE ")	.	.	.	.	.	238
HEREDITY (FROM " LIFE ")	.	.	.	.	.	241
TIME-SERVERS	.	.	.	.	.	244
ADIEU TO THE MUSE	.	.	.	.	.	246



# THE STAR FIELDS

## APOLOGY

**N**O glorious verse I send you,  
No sensuous music trolled  
Like the lark's, when the sons of the Morning  
Stand mute, and the Gates unfold  
For God to gather the notes anew  
That He gave of old ;  
But a plain-song, sweet to the singer,  
Very simple and sweet,  
Honey of earth for thee to gather  
And eat.

No wonderful words I send you,  
No storming of thoughts divine,  
To carry all listening hearts with envy,  
And some with a worship fine,  
And none with the level sense of love  
Which the gods confine ;

## APOLOGY

But a language clear to the singer,  
Very lowly and clear.  
Brook-words uttered for thee, and silence  
To hear.

No marvellous love I send you,  
No passionate break of fire  
That, scorching the lover's heart, consumeth  
The heart which he must desire,  
And raiseth man to the lonely God  
In his bliss so dire ;  
But a friendship deep to the giver,  
Very hidden and deep,  
Treasures of earth for thee, the digger,  
To keep.

## TO MEMORY

AN ODE

### I

MEMORY, sweet mother of Oblivion,  
Holding thy belted child beside thy knee  
With mellow tales and histories of things done

Like prophesyings of the things to be,  
Watching the rising dreams in his rapt eyes,  
His flickering smiles and gentle dolorous sighs,  
—Or haply bidding him begone to play

That thou mayest see his dancing hair and gay  
Young slender limbs in languorous exercise.

Behold the boy amid the broken toys  
Which Life, his fretful brother, left awhile :  
How skilfully he mends, how soon enjoys,  
And in the summer of his mother's smile

## TO MEMORY

Flies like a happy bird that never knew  
The winter, or disconsolately flew  
Down long bleak barren leagues of weary sky  
Back to his native summer, wondering why  
He ever proved his wings and hope untrue.

## II

Memory, thou sweeter sister of Regret  
And of thy brighter fickle sister Hope,  
—Wise sad and true, sweetest and loveliest  
Sister ! like tender Evening, turning slope  
Upon the West, sweet looker-back of day,  
To see the World through rosy mists and gray,  
And not to melt the mellow mists and show  
The naked world less beautiful below,  
Like day's forelooker, Dawn, in Hope's dire way.

I call thy gentle heed upon my song,  
Mother of Poesy and Dreams divine,  
To whom the music and high thought belong  
If aught of thought or music here combine,  
—That, when the woven melody is done  
And all whom it may please are dead and gone,  
Thou mayest give it as a gift of grace,  
Unequal, though the best my hand can trace,  
To young Oblivion, thy gracious son.

## III

Memory, thou high-walled Garden where I find,  
The sweetest and the choicest flowers of all,  
Most fragrant shrubs, most delicate tendrils twined,  
And honey-dropping boughs ambrosial,  
And all of beauty that my heart can dress—  
An ordered garden, a sweet wilderness,  
High Art's self-conquest, where I still may go,  
Lost between drifts of summer and drifts of snow,  
And of no careful tendance ever guess.

So well hath Time, the gardener, done his work  
That not a weed of all those weeds remains ;  
But never have I seen his gleaming fork  
Or his warped body at his careful pains ;  
Nor have I thought that he had ever set  
His nailèd feet within the borders yet,  
Till I had left them and in sad compare  
At last had wondered upon all that care  
That such a perfect garden could beget.

## IV

Memory, thou populous city seen afar,  
Sun-lapped and kindling to the sky with spires,  
—Or veiled in mist, a watery avatar,  
All globed with tinting bubble-domes—Desire's

Imperial abode, high Capitol,  
Where in his towery palace he may dwell  
    A king revered, that was a tyrant late,  
    A happy servant to his high estate  
And full obeyed being so dutiful.

And visited, fair city, thy broad streets  
    Are filled with tireless business to and fro :  
Here Friendship hath his work and fair retreats,  
    And Wisdom teaches all that Love would know,  
And Art pronounces all that Sweetness can,  
    And Vain-boy Glory is become a man,  
    And Joy strikes out from all the dreaming clocks  
        His mellow quarters, time's unheeded shocks,  
And all is happiness republican !

## v

Memory, thou quiet graveyard and remote,  
    With gray moss-quartered headstones all awry,  
Where Passion walketh like a priest devout,  
    And all so peacefully those dead Hopes lie ;  
And crippled Weariness and Pain diseased  
Sleep there like hapless friends who briefly pleased,  
    And, smiling through their life-long anguish, wore  
        The light of Heaven on the human shore,  
And from their fetters early were released.

There Sorrow, like a sexton bent and old,  
Keeps trim the little mounds and neatly dressed,  
Or by his lanthorn digs the rootful mould  
Where the last happy slumberer shall rest,  
—With mild indifference and aweless play  
Of thought on trivial happenings of the day.  
And sometimes dreams, like thoughtless sheep,  
    will pass  
Browsing upon the overgrown rich grass,  
And Pleasure, like their piping shepherd, stray.

## VI

Memory, thou happy darkness where sweet ghosts  
Wander, thou steadfast tomb whither repair  
The risen souls from Heaven's encrimsoned coasts  
To seek the dust which they abandoned there,  
And rearrayed in living flesh resume  
The well-known lovely ways before the tomb.  
—Bright resurrection ! antedating death,  
Clearer than hope, more palpable than breath !  
—Strong cancelling of sunset and the gloom !

Memory, thou rivered forest where I walk  
With living friends that were so long since dead,  
And feel their hands and faces firm, and talk  
With them, as I the spirit were instead

## TO MEMORY

Crept back upon the happy world at last,  
And they with gentle doubt were overcast,  
    But would not vex my spirit with a doubt,  
    So strove with very tender searching-out  
To telescope the present in the past !

## THE CHOICE OF ACHILLES

**T**HY billows knell  
Their own wild passing-bell,  
And tolling die, O Sea ;  
But in full fervour of their might,  
And white with fervour of delight,  
And having reaped all life as in one sheaf,  
They die for very glory utterly.  
Nor live they on to learn the bitter grief  
For splendour lost,  
Or obdurate regret that recreates  
Delight which still he wrecks and dissipates,  
Or that dull worm despair that gnaweth most.

Yes, like a wave, my Mother I will be,  
And die in turmoil, not tranquillity !  
I will ride glory like a horse  
For my brief date,  
And thou shalt weep above my corse  
Untimely low,

Weeping thy loss and Hellas' ! but elate  
That thine own child had spent his godhead so.  
For me shall Hellas wear my fame  
Upon her hills as she doth wear her Gods,  
And heroes shall invoke my name  
Ere they plunge headlong in the battle-floods.

Wouldst have me still a girl to lead  
A life as level as the summer sky ?  
Still would the man prevail and need  
A life like ocean ridged tempestuously,  
That he might feed thereby  
His full of being. Wouldst thou have me drop  
Nodding into the grave a void old man,  
When age's prop  
Bent and then broke and all my features ran  
Wrinkled and rivered—if I thus decayed  
Had done no more than breathe and smile,  
Should be no more remembered, having paid  
No due to patient Honour ? I will pile  
Memories like mountains, monumental deeds,  
Solid and scaleable, Jove-high, and win  
That steep Olympus-life, that still exceeds  
Its briefest date, within the heart of men.

Yet were it noble still to have ta'en  
The sheaf of joy, and threshed the grain ;  
And ground the sallow kidneys 'twixt the stones  
Of care ; and spread  
Before the hungry soul, that owns  
No wisp of gleaning, royally our bread ;  
To tend our people well  
And waxing old  
To pass, leaving our name to dwell  
Not on the lips of every warring wind  
That uncontrolled  
Yields up his stubborn ghost and dies,  
But in the quiet gardens of the mind  
Brooding like Love over his paradise.

My Mother, it were noble thus,  
Having foregone  
The keen strife and the glorious  
Hazard, to win  
Honour ungrasped for. But this way alone  
Lies for the silver spirits that with ease  
Keep in their scabbards : blades of steel  
Tempered as mine would fret within,  
Must leap and flash and strike and cease  
In contest shrill ;

Or rot within the shade of peace  
A mockery still.

I choose for strife and glory, and for death  
Early and like a crown.  
And he, my Mother, whom thou mournest there,  
Shall still be worthy of thy tears. Renown  
Shall greet thee from cold lips like breath ;  
Beauty shall still array the clear  
Young limbs ; and closely furled beneath  
The helm or cloak or sandal the deep wound  
Shall with its own proud lips relate  
The splendid fate.  
Then with delight thy heart shall bound,  
And I shall win  
An Immortality of youth and fame  
And love's sweet blame  
Therein.

## BETWEEN THE TRENCHES

**H**OW strangely did you break upon  
That sudden land beyond life's veil ?  
A moment did your spirit fail  
As mine when first I knew you gone  
The last dark journey, saw your clay,  
So vacant, loveless, borne away,  
And the features that I loved to scan  
The same but of another man  
Unknown—a bright dream all undone ?

What stranger did the bearers lift  
In their soiled stretcher lightly laid  
Where I had seen you fall adrift  
From life—had time to be afraid ?—  
That, all of you that had breathed and moved,  
That, none of you that lived and loved,  
A shell that so I seemed to hate  
For claiming still its lost inmate,  
A false pretence, a solid shade.

Shadow more solid, but less real  
Than love and laughter, whence it fell  
Across my path with mute appeal  
And served your spirit's purpose well—  
So well that even I could see  
It indistinguishably thee,  
Till you had left it like a sheath  
With laughter in the hands of death,  
And left me gay, not miserable.

Ah ! love had never more to lose :  
If certain love had less to tell  
Then might I in despair's excuse  
Bid you a hopeless vain farewell,  
And by the stranger's grave have wept  
A solemn while, and sadly kept  
In mind his features filled not through  
With breathing life, love living, you  
Who smiled upon his burial.

## THE BEE

**B**EE-BREAD packed upon his thighs,  
Labouring home the last bee flies.  
Judged he of his strength so well  
That at last fordone he fell  
On the hive-sill swooning, dead,  
Safe with the yellow bright bee-bread.

Out they hurried soon enough  
To unpack the precious fragrant stuff ;  
Pushed from the littered sloping stair  
His useless body hindering there,  
Not even sparing him the thought  
To blame him that he overwrought,  
Robbing the hive of future spoil,  
Being so prodigal of toil.

## GHOSTS

(FLANDERS, 1915)

**B**Y rosy woodlands all aglow  
With Autumn, slow-consuming fire,  
By drintling brooks that broaden now,  
By hill and hollow and mead and mire,  
By farms mid all their yellow ricks  
From ivied chimney smoking blue,  
And by the lofty kiln where bricks  
Stand piled in cubes so red and new,  
By queer thatched hamlets all askew,  
And by the little unbusy town  
Around the old gray spire we knew,  
We pass again, but all unknown.

Again we guide the jolting plough,  
Or bake the brittle tinting clay ;  
But none will mark our labour now,  
Urge as we will, toil as we may.

L. O. AND K. R.

KILLED IN ACTION, SEPTEMBER 25, 1915

**H**OW are the mighty fallen—  
Giving much glory  
Unto the earth their mother,  
But from me  
Taking how much more glory,  
The glory of friendship :—  
God of Battles,  
What heart have I left for thee ?

Beautiful in their lives  
The singer telleth ;  
And in their deaths how splendid,  
Oh, who can tell !  
How in glorious death I love them,  
How can I say ?—  
I who in life  
Loved them so unspeakably well.

## THE NAIAD

**T**HE dewy fields like roughened silver shone  
When down his vapour-valley cragged with fire  
The rosy sun browed up to look upon  
    The waking freshness of his heart's desire ;  
    Then leaped into the skies in full attire  
Of blazing splendour, for the Earth to praise,  
That in her yearning seemed more beautiful always.

Wet were the ringing woodlands tall ; and still  
Thin shreds of mist hung tangled in their hair,  
Sure proof that in the night-time dark and chill  
    The sun's great fleecy sheep had pastured there,  
    And now were wandered into the wide air  
Since first their shepherd's rosy crook was seen  
Shining before him as he clomb the steep ravine.

Now all the birds were singing those fresh songs  
    That fetch the rapid heart up and restore

Time to that point which Memory prolongs  
Behind and hapless Hope projects before  
—That happy point, eternity's bright core.  
And like soft showers their singing seemed to fall,  
And like the coloured bow love to brood over all.

And I along the ringing woodland went  
With all my heart wide like a crystal pool :  
The tender flowers, leaves, boughs, firmament,  
Shone back untremulously clear and cool  
—A new discovered country beautiful !  
But clearer than a pool my heart shone through,  
For there the songs of birds were sound-reflected too.

And the sweet-mingled odours of the flowers  
Breathed back. O happy Present which outsped  
The wingèd Past, and resting on his powers  
Flew not to meet the Future far ahead !  
—Nay, drew time in and timeless was instead,  
Like sleep or swoon that sets the spirit free  
To lie ungathered out in all eternity.

But suddenly upon my heart there fell  
Thought like a shadow—not to warp and blur  
Like breath bright images which there did dwell,

Nor like joy's self within the pool astir,  
Nor like the stone that Petulance flings there  
—But like a darkness brooding low to blot  
Them softly out as yearning, and distort them not !

For up the grassy bank beside the wood  
The brisk white-bobbing rabbits fleetly ran  
In bossy flight, and vanished : with her brood  
Down to the river rushes split with tan  
Sped the black moorhen, flicker-tailed. "Who can  
Affright the creature so ? " I thought—and saw  
A maiden from its ribbon swing her hat of straw !

—Of yellow plaited straw. And as she came  
She laughed to see the red-billed moorhen's haste,  
And waited till the fluffy brood became  
Invisible within the water's waste.

Then forward like a goddess yet she paced  
Behind her fluttering laughter keen, that stung  
Like most delicious lightning my heart's roots  
among.

Like lullèd thunder o'er my heart she broke ;  
And Love, who had been sleeping there so long  
That life had near forgotten him, awoke

Believing he to dreams did still belong,  
And strove to see her baffling face among  
My heart's wild waves which, stilling out in vain,  
Ere they could hold reflection wildly rose again !

She passed. And she was beautiful indeed !  
Alas I cannot tell you what she wore !  
—But slender, stately seemed she as a reed,  
And like the river's waves she passed before  
My sight, all grace of motion. Nothing more  
For very joyful blindness could I see,  
Save that she went along, and passing looked at me.

Oh ! who will draw for me her haunting face  
—Pale, haggard, dark and beautiful as pain,  
Uneager-passionate ?—or haply trace  
A blonder beauty that shall still retain  
My memory—until she pass again—  
With honey-coloured hair and rosy smiles ?  
—Nay, hair like river-grasses binds my brain the  
whiles !

Alas, a lovely naiad, simply clad  
In flowing grace and her limbs' loveliness !  
But still my heart will horde the joy he had,

And strive to clothe her in a human dress,  
And tease me with her swinging hat, and press  
This burning hopeless question, " Wherfore ran  
Those frightened creatures from her then, as from  
a man ? "

## C.'S FRAGMENTS

**H**OW the wind from perished embers  
Blows the great gray flakes along,  
Like the echoes of a song  
Which a poet's heart remembers  
From its travellings among  
Brighter worlds, and as they hasten  
Strives to catch and bind and fasten,  
Building up from strength to strength  
All that music's fabric strong,  
And leaves upon the world at length  
Ruins that time did never wrong.

## LIFE

### AN EPIGRAM

**M**AN hath but little time to set  
His strong-built house in order, yet  
Spendeth what little time he hath  
In building him a house of lath.

## SONG

O SWEET my love! O true my love!  
What did we most forget  
When in a sweet remembering  
We could remember yet?  
Even that we were remembering  
We did forget,  
Enjoying yet.

O sweet my love! O false my love!  
What would I most forget  
When in a sad remembering  
I must remember yet?  
Even that I am remembering  
I would forget,  
Forgiving yet.

## ANCILLA DOMINI

**S**HE bare two lilies in her hand,  
Dispassionate as snow,  
Made by the Architect who planned  
Her peerless brow ;  
She needed not, as you would see,  
These sceptred flowers of purity ;  
But gave them splendour and white command  
Below.

Yet seemed it all as service sweet,  
Which still itself disowns :  
She took due homage and praises meet,  
And hidden frowns  
With such humility of mien  
As would befit a sovereign Queen,  
When subject monarchs before her feet  
Lay crowns.

She wore a garland in her hair,  
Blue cornflowers loosely bound,  
And you would say she was more fair  
Than royally crowned ;  
Tho' cornflowers are so royal and blue  
And, lacking scent, make up in hue  
And fill with beauty the wooing air  
Around.

Graces about her seemed to sway  
As she more royally moved :  
She was more worshipped, you would say,  
Than fitly loved.  
For who could love and not demean  
So true, so natural a queen,  
Tho' love should bury his crown away  
Disproved ?

And yet such tenderness withal  
Even with her beauty vied,  
That love rose from his worship all  
Unsatisfied,  
And searched her pale uneager face,  
Like Spring in Winter's white embrace,  
That came too rashly, poor happy thrall,  
And died.

Within her hungry eyes intense  
Her searching spirit hung,  
As in the night's dark vault immense  
The stars are stung :  
About her holy ways she went  
In solemn kind of languishment—  
A wringing passion by innocence  
Unstrung.

Invisibly as breezes pass  
In Maytime through the land,  
And bend like hair the shadowy grass  
With gentle hand,  
A consecration, a caress,  
Of more than human tenderness,  
Approved her beauty with love that was  
Unscanned.

## THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

**I**N a manger where the kine  
Munched their hay, the babe divine  
Lay, and those streaked cattle mild,  
Wondering at the little child  
Sniffed around his lowly bed,  
But left unwrenched beneath his head  
The soft sweet hay he needed now  
Who could so bounteously bestow.

Strong like wine the starry night—  
One large travelling star forlorn  
Guiding, leading, urging bright—  
Mary's child is safely born !

Who are these ? What do they bring ?  
—Salutations to a King.  
In their rich and royal array  
—Surely they have missed the way.

Joseph, go and bring them back  
From the rude and broken track  
To the highway broad with ease  
For such apparelled kings as these !

Strong like wine the starry night—  
One large staying star forlorn,  
Urging, pointing, anxious-bright—  
Mary's child is royally born !

Gold and Frankincense and Myrrh ?  
—Oh ! what mean ye, sir and sir,  
Kneeling in upon the straw,  
Rapt of eye, as if ye saw,  
In a palace fair and free,  
A King and greater far than ye  
With your golden crowns so bright  
And gifts so rich and exquisite.

Strong like wine the starry night—  
One large rosy star forlorn,  
Pointing, crowning, dooming, bright—  
Mary's child divine is born !

## RUTH : ABBESS

FULL orbed and crimson rose the harvest-moon,  
And stars lit up the arid summer night,  
And no dews fell upon the thirsty land ;  
But where sad Ruth had lain, the withered leaves  
Shone happy with her tears. Then she arose  
And sought her chamber in the eastern tower,  
And sadly drew the curtain from her shrine,  
And with the taper trembling in her hand  
Lit up the holy candles, and kneeled down  
And gazed with eyes devout as they were sad  
Upon the ivory crucifix ; then bowed  
And pressed a silver cross upon her brow  
And prayed in agony of soul and said,  
In deep calm dreadful tones, “ Mother of Christ,  
Our blessed Lady, hearken to my prayer,  
And still repeat it in the ears of God.  
This was our wedding-day, but he is slain,  
Alas, and buried hence—I know not where :  
But grant me in the solemn peace of night  
One sweet communion of soul with him,

And to thy service I will give myself  
And all I have and all the years shall bring.  
Yea, I will give thee my whole heart, nor have  
Aught of mine own but consecrate to thee.”  
So earnestly she prayed, and laid her down  
Still robed, and clasped her hands across her breast,  
As if for death. And suddenly she slept.

And on the morrow at the flush of day  
She rose and kneeled again before her shrine ;  
But heaviness had left her limbs, and joy  
Replenished her, and gratefully she prayed.

And when she stood before her tiring-glass  
And looped the shining tresses from her brow,  
Aghast she saw upon it still impressed  
The fashion of her little silver cross ;  
And with a soft pure light it seemed to shine  
And soothe her spirit. But with dreadful haste,  
Fearing the sign and jealous for her joy,  
Two tresses thick she drew with woman’s skill  
Across her forehead and impleached them low,  
Like Roman maids of old ; and thus concealed  
Went down to meet her sire.

But all day long,

Though she assayed to tell her sacred vow  
And spake in timid words, the brusque old man,  
Impatient of her faltering tongue, broke in  
And turned her will with words of hearty cheer,  
Or told of hawk and hound that pleased him late ;  
Deeming she mourned and strove with grief to ask  
Of her dead lover, he would soothe her thus.  
But when at eve she rose and served his wine,  
With sudden strength she told her secret vow ;  
And first with scorn he answered light, and then,  
“ Marry ! ” quoth he, “ where is thy daughter’s  
care ?  
And wilt thou leave alone thy widowed sire  
To nurse the shades, with none to serve his wine  
Or loose his harness when he comes from war ?  
Thy mother died for thee, and thou hast all  
A wife’s and daughter’s love—thou shalt not go ! ”  
But she had gathered courage from her voice  
And from his scorn and even from his grief,  
And when with woeful tears she prayed him still  
He waxèd wroth and vehemently cried,  
“ Christ’s Blood ! What folly is it ! Thou art young,  
And in young hearts love springeth like a plant.  
One blossom dies and falls and feeds the roots  
With rich decay, and thence new blossoms burst

And fairer.—Keep thy purpose if thou wilt  
—If twelve moons hence thou art unchanged, and  
still

Repentest not, I will not hinder thee ! ”  
And she, enkindled by his angry words,  
The more for the great love she bore him, spake  
Coldly : “ A promise is it ? ” “ Aye, a promise ;  
And mayest thou be truer to thy God  
Than to thy natural vow, a father’s love ! ”  
So spake he, still unmindful in his wrath  
Of her betrothal in the days gone by,  
And she : “ So be it ! ” Then she kissed his brow,  
And sought her chamber and kneeled down to pray ;  
But no words came. And through the wakeful night  
Her soul was haunted by her aged sire ;  
And desolate he looked, and raised his brow  
And smiled upon her sadly. And she wept,  
And in her anguish cried aloud, “ Alas !  
Christ’s Mother give me strength ! ”

Now as the year  
Rolled through the heavy winter and his wheels  
Were caked with snow and hindered, and some-  
times  
His driver Time blew in his chilly hands  
And made advance no more, with tender care

And service meet she waited on her sire,  
And guarded every whim with wakeful love,  
And yearned upon him with her sacred vow  
For ever at her like a canker at her heart.  
And oft when she had served his wine and kissed  
His brow and sadly to her chamber crept,  
He chode his heart that he had ever used  
Harsh words and taunted her with lack of love,  
And muttered to himself, " God will forgive  
And Christ His Mother if she thus forget  
Her sacred vow ! "

And at the break of spring

He went to war, and she was left alone.  
And when all the woods were green and all the hills  
Were white with snowy drifts of May, she found  
That she was ripening with child, and awed  
She told her aged nurse and bade her keep  
It secret ; and she wept for fear and joy,  
And her old nurse for joy. And when the moon,  
The ninth moon from her mystic marriage bed,  
Was full, the child was born, and all her heart  
Was turned to her dead lover and his child ;  
And long she prayed before her little shrine  
For gratitude. And secretly she kept  
Her child and cherished him, and all forgot

Her warring sire save when with sudden dread  
She thought upon his wrath. And then she turned  
And bade her nurse be secret with hard voice ;  
And when the nurse chode with her for her doubt,  
She wept upon the child and softly prayed  
Forgiveness for her fear.

Now when the time  
Drew near her sire's return and the set day  
That she should keep her vow, then sad she grew  
And reasoned with herself, " If I should go  
And to the Abbess' question, when she asks—  
Art thou a virgin ? Hast thou had no child ?  
—Should answer, Nay, and be refused, it were  
A shame upon my father's house ; and if  
I answer, Yea, I am not wed, and swear  
I have no child, it were a lie to God.  
God hath done this ; and for my father's sake,  
And for the love I bear him, hath absolved  
My sacred vow." And yearning o'er her child  
She spake, and strove to ease her spirit thus ;  
And vainly strove.

At noon her sire returned,  
And she with heavy soul his stirrup held,  
And heard his greeting absently, and let

His arms embrace her, moving not. And then  
He stroked her long bright hair, and softly bent  
Her forehead back, and looked upon her face,  
And kissed her lips, and tenderly he said,  
“ How pale thou art, my daughter ! How thy smiles  
And joy are veiled in grief of love too long  
Deserted. I have been too long abroad.  
Forgive me, O my child ! ” And then she wept ;  
And weeping on his breast he bore her in.

Now when he had appeased his hunger keen,  
And she with trembling hand had served his wine,  
And he grew glad at heart, “ My love,” quoth he,  
“ It is the day that thou shouldst keep thy vow,  
Art thou so minded still ? ” In mirth he spake.  
And she with low cry utterance replied,  
“ Nay, no new love hath won my anxious heart  
From my dead lord, to spoil my sacred vow ;  
But here I would abide to serve thee still,  
And God in mercy hath absolved my vow.”  
And joyed at heart he cried, “ God’s will be done,  
Who watcheth o’er a father’s love ! ” And rose,  
And took her hand and drew her to his side ;  
But with a startled cry she broke away,  
And hurried from the hall, and left her sire  
Astonished. And he blamed the gleaming wine

And his loosed tongue that he had called to mind  
Her vow, and bitterness of soul ; and sware,  
And strode the darkening hall ; and from his wrath  
His hounds with close tails slunk.

But Ruth had sped

And reached her chamber, and made sure the door,  
And would have cried aloud, but there she saw  
Her child asleep upon his little bed.  
Then tenderly she bowed and kissed his cheek,  
And whispered softly, “ O my son, my son !  
Where hadst thou found a mother’s care ? And I  
Had died for need of thee ! ”

Now when she lay

That night upon her bed a soothing peace  
Stole o’er her, and she slept ; for lack of sleep  
Hung heavy on her brows. And suddenly  
Her plighted lord appeared beside her bed,  
And all around him shone a tender light  
That showed his features pale and sorrowful.  
And stooping low he kissed the little babe  
Upon his brow, and yearningly he looked,  
And bowed his head upon his cloak and wept,  
And kneeled before her shrine. Then she awoke,  
And plucked the baby from his bed and felt

His smooth warm limbs, and clasped him to her  
breast ;  
But o'er her arm his little head fell back,  
And stricken cold with fear she looked and saw  
Upon his brow the image of a cross  
That gleamed with wondrous light. But he was  
dead.

Then with dry heart and 'wilder'd eyes she laid  
The child upon his bed and softly sleeked  
His pillow down, as if he lived and slept.  
And then she clothed herself in white, and left  
Her long black hair unbound, her feet unshod,  
And took the child, and down the steep dark stair  
She stole into the night.

At early dawn,  
When the old portress at the Convent gates  
Shot back the bolts and swung the great doors wide,  
She found a lady kneeling on the steps  
And clasping at her breast a dead cold child.

## NAIAD'S SONG

WHERE the mountain-fed torrent  
Falls shivered like glass,  
As a stretched hand the vapour  
Points down the green pass ;  
And deep in the shadow  
The brooding fern tires,  
With green life too heavy ;  
And drooped from their wires  
The spider-like ivies  
Hang each a sad knot  
O'er swift meshes of water,  
Or vivid green blot  
Of mosses that fleck like a plague-spring of green  
The black-bedded ravine.

And if ye will follow the thin pointing hand  
Of mist, ye will come  
To an island edged round with a silt of grey sand,  
Like the nail of a thumb,

A slab of pink stone where we hover and sing,  
At the head of the Autumn and trail of the Spring,  
Now of perishing youth and of love that consumes  
The heart it enkindles, and beauty that wanes ;  
Now of glory that with its gay colours illumes—  
Bright banners that lead to destruction—and shines  
On all the fair trees save the cedars and pines ;  
The passion and glory which charm and betray  
Their fellows, but most to be pitied are they,  
For they see the sad changes and brood in despair  
When the winter lies thick in their hair.

## LOVE

(LATE AUTUMN, 1912)

THE trees are plucked, the azure skies decay,  
The flaming year is to his ashes burned,  
And all the world is scarfed in misty gray ;  
The spells are broken and the songs unlearned ;  
And Love, whose lamp glows purest and most fair  
    Amid the darkness of unlovely things,  
Alone of all the spirits of the year  
Remaineth here,  
    And in the ashes like a cricket sings.

Alone—alone from Winter's lifeless head  
    She crept to meet young Spring upon his way  
And all the folk that followed in his tread ;  
    To pass with him on Autumn's turning-day  
—Blithe Hope, and Pleasure with his dancing eyes,  
    And loose-girt Revelry, and light-foot Dream,  
Industrious Happiness, long companies  
Most weatherwise  
    And soon to pack when Phœbus clipped his beam.

TO CAPTAIN GREWAR

**M**AY all that dazzles other folk  
Simply delight thee : to this end  
Good fortune's utmost I invoke  
On thee, my friend.

Knowing how surely 'twixt your knees  
You grip the jade howe'er she plunge ;  
And, undislodged, punish with ease  
Her backward lunge.

And if she roll, or rearing fall  
To crush you from her, fell intent,  
Can well escape, still keeping all  
Your management.

Knowing with what uneager skill  
You curb her random speed and trend,  
Then spur her on against her will  
To your good end.

## TO CAPTAIN GREWAR

And if she come, for once subdued,  
To muzzle at your careless hand,  
You, who so long have understood,  
Still understand.

Then ride good fortune far and first,  
By ploughland, fallow, dale and hill,  
Whether she do her best or worst,  
Her master still.

## EPITHALAMIUM

**L**IE thou at last, foregathered as thou wert  
To her bright soul, in the limbs' white embrace  
That even slumber hardly shall displace  
Or happy weariness leave all ungirt,  
In soul and body sealed, with heart to heart,  
And lips to lips, wherethrough the spirits race,  
Bound hand in hand to sanctify with grace  
What love calls holy—and may life leave unhurt.

Sweet union, in the spirit long foreseen,  
Now in the body doubly made complete,  
Wherever may love ever brood serene,  
And ye for ever lying at love's feet  
Know only slumber's parting, when his keen  
Sword like a kiss disparts your kisses sweet.

## CYPRIAN

TRANSPORTED to some trenchant mountain high,

If thence, my friend, thou could'st at once behold  
Tumultuous life with chances manifold—

A many-rifted ocean waveringly

Singing 'twixt shore and shore, 'twixt sky and sky,

As 'twere time's mighty pendulum controlled,

And yet controlling the large moments told

Among the dialled stars so silently ;—

Could'st thou, I say, encompass in one ken

Life's unpredominant whole, thou could'st not  
choose

But laugh at it, or pity it, like a boy

Generous. But thou, amongst deluded men

Sharest the world's greater part, the happier use

Despite those chances fully to enjoy.

## LUCRETIUS' DREAM

I DREAMED that Satan stood beside my bed,

And yet so unlike Satan, as I thought,

Was he, for his calm countenance was fraught  
With such sad sweetness and such hapless dread ;  
And hopelessness from his dry eyes was shed

More pitiful than tears, but so inwrought

With some appalling purpose, that distraught  
I cried aloud. And answering he said :

“ Friend, for thy pity thou hast won my love

That unto thee no pity can return—

Pitiless love—stern punishment ! ” And while  
I watched his wordless lips in anguish move

My own lips eased his heart in language stern :

“ Him most to love whom most I must be-  
guile.”

## HECTOR

WHEN Winter took from February's breast  
    The infant Spring against his hoary beard,  
Whilst in his cold blue eyes like fire appeared  
Such tender love as pride leaves unconfess,  
The child laughed out at being so carest  
    And smote his little fist, all undeterred  
By his sire's frowning mien and rugged word,  
And icy harness, and white brustling crest.

" Go, little imp," ungraciously he said,  
    " Back to thy Mother's tenderer heart." The child  
Clung to his beard with laughter, undismayed,  
    Nor by his Mother's baits would be beguiled,  
Nor by his Father's threats, who, grown afraid,  
    Bent down with kisses and for quarter smiled.

## SHELLEY'S HEART

**H**OW the tall flames above the caving pyre  
Fold like the Cherubim with meeting wings  
Above God's Ark, when from its wanderings  
It came to solemn rest at God's desire,  
And Solomon, as silently as fire,  
So splendidly accomplished promised things,  
And housed his God more sumptuously than kings,  
For the disappointed spirit of his sire !

Cedar from Lebanon, from Ophir gold,  
And from the Syrian king his craftsmen skilled—  
No sound of hammer fell, no chisel shrilled  
Within the Temple's precincts' haunted fold,  
Till soon 'twixt brooding Cherubim, 'tis told,  
Between the staves God's Ark stood as God  
willed.

## THE LOST MISTRESS

**W**HAT love might be you never thought ;  
    But in your eyes and in your hair  
        Love set all sweetness like a snare,  
Although perchance you knew it not ;  
And in the waving of your hands  
The mystery of unknown lands,  
    The spell of tattered banners leading,  
        The lure of conquest still receding,  
The easy power of strong commands ;

And in the wavering of your feet  
    A languid purpose, lithe as fire,  
        To tread upon prostrate desire  
And lift him like a flame of heat ;  
And in your branching neck the ease,  
The silent beauty-strength of trees  
    Upholding heaven ; in all your motions  
        The supple sovereign sway of oceans  
And all their costly sympathies ;

And in your voice the baffling note  
That æons wait on till it thrills  
The thrilling silence of the hills,  
And earth is shaken like a mote  
Between the fingers of the sun ;  
Yet you knew not what love had done,  
Or if you did, what lovely features  
Can still belie such monstrous creatures !  
Nay, this I cannot think upon.

## DIANA OF THE TEMPEST

**H**ER wild black tresses blown out before her,  
    Storm comes filling the feckless skies,  
And who hath the terror to triumph o'er her  
    Or sympathise ?

Not shall the wooing of weakness win her,  
    Nor stronger scorn break her pride like bread :  
Only by the wild wind-hounds that bedin her  
    Can her heart be led.

## MEDUSA AWAKE

WINTER like a penitent  
Comes in her thin shift of frost,  
And like bows the skies are bent  
With their feathery shafts engrossed,  
And like shields the black pools shine—  
Oh, save her from the wrath divine !

Like a penitent—beware !  
What is this that I behold—  
Elf-locks ? Serpents ! writhing hair,  
Features lovely—fell and cold  
From the black pool's mirror shine  
Beauty—horror—both divine !

## SUNSET

WHEN the sun to his bed is declining,  
And the clouds in his colours await  
His rosy cessation of shining,  
    And the shadowy birth of repose,  
And night with her black hair's entwining  
    Of all his proud fiery estate,  
And the moon with her silver repining—  
    Love's star-troubled close.

All the woodlands are wet with the risen,  
    The strange drenching earth-rain of dew,  
And like Danaë free in her prison  
    Lies Earth in the arms of the mist  
All golden, and splendours bedizen  
    The lake's second heaven, where blew  
Of late little breezes to wizen  
    Her pale amethyst.

## INTERLUDE

WHEN the trees like guttering candles stand  
Side-stacked with lobes of snow  
Around the bier of the cold gray year  
And the hours, his children, hand in hand,  
    Wondering kiss his brow,  
The cold white brow that rebukes their kisses,  
    And the motionless lips—are they angry ? How ?

Of the hours, his children, the youngest sings  
    Like a bee round her father's bed  
Softly, and lifts up the pall's white drifts,  
And hides from his feignèd slumberings,  
    Laughing with happy dread,  
And waits for the hand that gropes and misses  
    And grasps, and the wild sweet words unsaid  
—Mumbled out in a smother of kisses,  
    The wave that breaketh beyond the dead.

## ACRISIUS

**H**OW white these winter's moments are,  
Slow-fluttering, half-substantial things ;  
Time falleth in a silver shower  
To the earth, his Danaë, fain to unbar  
His heart of love, and mock the king's  
Frost-oublieted iron tower,  
And fill her with the fatal Spring's  
Birth and most deadly generous power.

## THE MAN AND THE STATUE

“**O**NE whom God loved” men wrote upon the  
slab  
Of polished stone that roofed his last house in.  
Above his heart they wrote it, for his soul  
Returning thither—as a man grown great  
Revisiteth the little garden plot  
And cottage thatched, wry-windowed, crooked-  
walled,  
With sweet regret; and shrinks into the boy;  
And grows again into the toiling man;  
And loves the old pains and the pleasures old,  
Glad to throw off the splendour and the fame  
He is unused to still—thus for his soul  
Returning, till his heart’s walls crumple in,  
To fill the letters as he lightens through.

So: and they bade their fairest hands to carve  
Dead stone into a pale surprise of life,

His character and image, his calm face,  
With all its lines and hollows filled with good,  
Yet haunted with the holy care of one  
Who strove his little on the side of God  
To wring the world from co-original ill.  
And he, a sculptor of far-told renown,  
Rejoicing in the praise of this request  
And no less in the glorious enterprise,  
For thrice three days toiled on laboriously,  
Caught up by fervour neath the wings of time ;  
And so forgot his needs of flesh that late  
On the ninth day, by hunger overcome  
And the faint heart's revolt for sleep, he sank  
Before the half-hewn marble, sighing out  
“ God grant me strength to finish it, and I  
Resign the glory of my masterpiece ! ”

And at the burst of day they found him dead,  
But on his brow and round his parted lips  
A gentle light of triumph hung like life.  
They raised him with sad awe and laid him out  
Upon his bed, still grasping in his hands  
His instruments. And then between his brows  
They found the strange and delicate impress  
Of three large fingers, and beneath his hair,

Unsinged, a deep brown band, as though a crown  
Of mystic fire had lain there ; and they gazed  
Into each other's eyes and read therein  
The same unanswered question. Then they came  
And wondered at his work, and one with awe :  
“ ‘Tis flesh and blood, I swear it ! ” but the rest :  
“ Nay ’tis the natural colour of the stone,  
And thou art wrought upon by sudden death  
And those mysterious scars.” And he replied :  
“ By God’s own beard, I swear it, when we came  
And found the sculptor dead with that strange look,  
I felt this carven hand and it was warm—  
Just warm like flesh when the departing soul  
Hath sped, and the strained breast slowly hollowed  
in ;  
‘Tis cold now, but it yieldeth like dead flesh ! ”  
They felt and sadly smiled, and him they led  
Away, lest awful dread should work a harm  
Upon his mind.

And in the market-place  
They set the statue up ; and all men came  
And marvelled, and some wept. But as the days  
Passed o’er the market-place, the precious stone  
Began to peel and flake away like flesh  
From disembalmed bodies. And in dread,

## 60 THE MAN AND THE STATUE

Lest in the stress of weather the great work  
Should be destroyed, they moved it from its place  
And set it 'neath the Roof of Fame hard by.  
But there the stone still crumbled into dust,  
And all that beauty faded ; till they came  
One splendid daybreak, and in fear, cold fear,  
Found nothing but a skeleton—a cage  
Of empty bones. And while they stood amazed  
It crashed upon the pavement at their feet,  
Shattered to shards and splinters white and dread.

And soon with solemn candles and slow chant  
Of slow-processing choir the Fathers came,  
And gathered up the fragments and the dust,  
And laid them in a yellow vase of gold,  
And set them on a bier of olive wood.  
And round the urn they looped a coronal  
Of rosemary and lotus and dark bay  
And tremulous valley-lilies. Over all  
They spread a gauze of silk and silver thread ;  
And sprinkled holy water, and kneeled down,  
And to the fume and waft of incense high  
Made Latin prayer to Heaven. Then they bore  
The dust to the high altar through the town,  
And finger-blessed the kneeling populace.

## THE MAN AND THE STATUE 61

This is the story. And the slab remains  
In middle aisle of the cathedral there,  
Engraved, "One whom God loved." And still the vase  
Stands in the niche beneath the altar high.  
But who these men were, whom God loved, and who  
Carved out the statue, is no record known.

## THE DOVE

**G**O, little song,  
Sweet with the wisdom of undoubted love,  
And many-tinted as the foolish dove  
Glint unguessed colours in the fostering light  
Of eyes so blue and bright,  
As thou in silent music movest along.

Then furl thy wings  
Within the tender ramage of her heart  
Till she shall seek and all the boughs dispart,  
Searching for thee to feed her eyes upon,  
And finding thee anon  
Yield thee more sweet than every bird that sings.

## SIN

**S**IN, like delight,  
Hath pinions bright;  
And, like dark woe,  
Talons below,  
And the eagle's way  
To dash his living prey.

## PHILOSOPHY

**G**NARLED and knotted thoughts divine,  
Stripped of all dazzling colours rare  
That life, like Autumn, painted there  
To hide rough truth at love's decline.

Ruthless the silly leaves are stripped  
For winds to play with, rains to brew ;  
And wise old boughs are laid to view,  
Grand trunks which all vain storms have gripped.

Nay, hang up Autumn's hues again  
Tho' pleasure like a wanton prove ;  
One little treasured leaf of love  
Is worth all thinking's high disdain.

## RUBRICS

**T**Hese happy rubrics whilst I kiss  
Do I Love's proper service miss?  
Go, take the service, leaving me  
To my lips' glad idolatry.  
Pray ye and sing whilst I remiss  
Gain more, and kiss, and kiss, and kiss!

## SUNSHOWER

(FROM "THE OPIUM-EATER")

WARP of rain and woof of light,  
Woven tapestry of might,  
Veil of mystery whereon  
Pictures fleet are wrought and gone—  
Rich embroideries and fine,  
Faces in a trance divine  
At a moment caught to express  
All of strength and loveliness,  
All time's passion and delight  
Or anguish sweetly infinite.

## SONG

**S**OFTLY falls the moonlight,  
The beacon-light of love,  
And lightly on the tresses  
    Of the trees  
        The poising breeze  
Sheds the passion of his kisses—  
    Lightly lest the leaves should move !

And the leaves forbear to quiver  
    Lest they mar the soft enchantment,  
And they feed upon the giver  
    In a wondrous peace of bliss,  
And softly the world widens  
    Through the star-ceiled floors of heaven,  
And mortal bonds are riven  
    In the glory of a kiss.

TO OSWALD COULDREY

**W**HEN in dreams I shake you by the hand  
And you smile so sadly, O my friend,  
Summoned from afar to understand  
What of love I never else could send  
Since I cannot trust my hand to write  
Or you to read what he may not indite.

Come you by your own volition, born  
In the bee-like spirit, sensing home ?  
Or in love's long lariat caught and drawn,  
Had you to my heart's will to succumb ?  
Sad are you so dragged from comrades new,  
Or sad for our glad hours, alas ! too few ?

## WINTER

WHEN the panes are ferned with frost,  
And winter spurred rings all around,  
And mounting his white steed, to boast,  
Leaps nimbly from the crackling ground,  
And well astride sits there and sings  
Amid his charger's caperings—

“ To horse ! To horse ! ” my spirit cries,  
Bent life and limb to jeopardise ;  
From Autumn dreams my heart he wakes  
To see the pretty show he makes.

I love the Summer and the Spring  
And Autumn’s disillusioning ;  
But most I love the Winter brave  
And his white steed—the gallant knave !

TO K. R.

NOW the starlings rise in roars  
From the misty fields ;  
Summer with his ripening stores  
Unto Autumn yields ;  
Autumn slow to hurt or brag,  
Softly breaks his coloured flag.

Over each green citadel  
Is his ensign seen ;  
Summer bows, for all is well  
In conquest so serene.  
Peace, too, would he bring to me,  
Could I walk here, my friend, with thee.

## ZOE

**A** LONG delight,  
A growing bliss,  
With little blight,  
Life's morning is.

A little pain,  
And love's fleet boon  
Brings life amain  
To afternoon.

A waxing fear,  
A waning bliss,  
A dream unclear,  
Life's evening is.

## THE MAKING

NATURE, while thou didst sleep,  
From thy rent side  
God took a rib and built my frame, and deep  
The breath of life applied  
Unto my nostrils. And His breath subdued  
The splendid dust, that in a little heap  
His hands had clustered and imbued  
With glory, kneading it and moulding fair,  
Spreading it o'er the wondrous frame of bones  
Fashioned from thee,  
That He had builded there.  
And when He saw my heart strike free  
Did He pronounce  
That I was passing good,  
As once  
He spake of Adam ?

But not the keen wild mood  
And passion like the sun's,  
That with thy bones inheriting I feel  
Mastering my being through from brow to heel ;

Working my brain, than reason far more strong ;  
Driving my heart ;  
Pushing my spirit like a cloud aside,  
Or urging it along ;  
A restless prisoner forced to abide  
'Twixt walls he ever buffeteth apart ;  
Stirring wild joy and wilder brooding pain—  
Not this hath He subdued,  
Nor can set free again  
Except He slay, defeat of what He planned !

But when thy spirit, Nature, moveth grand,  
Serene and beautiful, His spirit glows  
To meet thine like a lover undismayed,  
And the twain greet awhile ;  
Till thine, either of conquest sore afraid,  
Or being coy and wanton, turns and grows  
Wild, terrible.

Then is the battle in my being waged,  
By truces oft suppressed, but never yet assuaged.

## INSOMNIA

**N**IIGHT, serene and infinite  
Beyond thy restless nodes of light  
And the white moon, that lower lies  
To plumb the immeasurable skies,  
The fathom-line full out—to miss  
The depth of the bottomless abyss,  
Where as above thou reignest now  
Though the sun hide the stars below  
From us, but unto thee afar  
Winks in the dark, a trivial star.

Older than light, but ever young,  
Send sleep, thy beautiful and strong  
Son, to enfold my eyes and free  
My soul that I be lost for thee.

## THE CALL

WHERE darkling spreads the Irish Sea  
I cry to thee, I cry to thee ;  
And like the sea birds' call on high,  
That seems to search the very sky  
Emptily,  
My voice is uttered for no reply.

From rheumy rock and shaling track,  
Echoing back, echoing back,  
My call comes strangely, far and free,  
In answer ; but so unlike thee  
That I could flee  
Despite the froward forbidding sea.

FLANDERS, 1915

**M**AN has the life of butterflies  
In the sunshine of sacrifice;  
Brief and brilliant, but more  
Guerdon than the honeyed flower,  
And more glory than the grace  
Of their gentle floating pace.

## RECOLLECTIONS

**H**OW green the Summer was, the sun  
How boon between the leaves.

I still can hear the river run  
And see the golden sheaves  
Beyond, and the ripe labour done,  
And the rut the wagon leaves.

I still can see the straining team  
And slow-laborious men,  
Each doing with the ease of dream  
The waking work of ten;—  
At least so did the labour seem  
To my sweet leisure then.

I still can hear the millwheel vast  
That turned the grinding stone,  
And suddenly my heart beating fast  
As it had never done:  
I still can see two shadows cast  
Before me by the sun.

## OLD AGE

LIGHTLY and delicately fall  
The wavering moments white,  
And long life's rugged mountain tops  
Have been forgotten quite,  
Since time so surely covered them  
With passion pure and bright.

## TO SPRING

AN ODE

SWEET Springs—how ye can teach me to remember ;

—Ah ! would that ye could teach me to forget  
The subtle secret worm that gnaweth yet,  
The live still spark within the perished ember,  
The weary promise broken all too oft,  
The brittle splendours veiled in hope so soft

—With your bright days that laugh to scorn the  
chill

Attempts of Winter to postpone them still  
With childish threatenings of the next November !

Who is the lovely slender boy there, wooing  
Between his curls ? The stripling, who is he  
With all youth's perilous grace and symmetry  
And the keen joy of love the still pursuing ?

—Regenerate Time? Can he be born again?  
And she? faint Hope, with love-lorn features plain,  
Can she outlive her reputation drear  
And merciless again herself forswear?  
—And Love again face all his sad undoing?

Who stretches out below the glistening beeches,  
His limbs untanned by Winter, white and free  
From Winter's fury casings, and in glee  
Across the stops with nimble finger reaches,  
Beating his sandalled foot to merry time?  
—Or smiling gazes through the mellow rime,  
And leaves his pipe to let sweet silence play  
To his light-dancing dreams her roundelay,  
Or listens to her tale's low-whispering speeches?

Ah, Pleasure! mid the dancers of the Valley  
I often saw thy glowing face before,  
Untimely Bacchus, leading a bright score  
Of merry worshippers to dance and dally  
—And neath the frowning of the silent hill  
To wake upon the sorry morning chill  
With aching brows. And with how little cheer  
They bathed their temples in the water clear  
Of ocean, kneeling on his margin shelly.

I, too, undrowsed, have bitterly repented,  
And flung the weighted ivy from my hair,  
And looped upon my quaking shoulder bare  
The loose-slipped libbard-skin, and so tormented  
In shame crept seaward. All the sweet disguise  
Of Spring can never hide thee from my eyes—  
    Oh come, forgetfulness!—though bright day bars  
    And taut-drawn night with all her drumming stars  
Maddens in her quiet fury discontented!

## ST. JOHN

JOHN, the belovèd disciple,  
Leaned on Jesus' breast,  
And he knew what another disciple feared  
And ten but dimly guessed.

The broken fragment of bread he took,  
And tasted flesh in the food ;  
And then he took the wine-cup,  
And bitterly drank blood.

And the calm strong words of Jesus  
Seemed tremulous and far,  
A motion of very desolate lips,  
The stifled voice of a star.

Alone he seemed in the Garden,  
Entranced at Jesus' side ;  
And he felt his great heart broken,  
And his body crucified.

And they laid their hands upon him  
That would so boldly stay ;  
But he left in their hands his garment,  
And naked he fled away.

## THE RAINBOW

**H**EAVEN shines upon our tears,  
A rainbow bright appears :  
We grasp thereat amain !  
Our tears are fled,  
The rainbow vanishèd ;  
Only the skies remain  
Bright, like chafed pain.

Again, for rage, we weep,  
And round the sunbeams sweep  
Below the rising cloud,  
And strike no more askance  
Upon our petulance,  
Lest it like grief grow proud,  
So brightly bowed.

Heaven strikes the coloured bow  
From tears, that man may know  
    Of grief the brightest hues,  
Lest joy as fair  
Should hold him from despair  
    And, by his soul's disuse,  
Even from God's House.

## THE UNJEALOUS GOD

**H**E asked for love :  
God offered him a friend.  
“ Nay, not this love,” said he ;  
“ But love to loosen, speed and bend  
My heart like water to an ocean-end,  
And not to hold my heart up steadily.  
—This love for me ! ”

He asked for power :  
God offered him a friend.  
“ Nay, not this power,” said he ;  
“ But power to gather, warp and rend  
Earth from her grooves and make amend,  
And not to keep earth spinning steadily.  
—This power for me ! ”

God gave him all  
He asked most bounteously ;

But, in the bitter end,  
“ Take all Thou gavest, Lord,” cried he,  
“ To my blind asking, still befriending me ;  
And give me, Lord, lest I again offend  
Thy heart, a friend ! ”

A friend he asked :  
“ I am thy friend,” said He ;  
“ So unto friendship’s end  
I gave thee sorrowful love to free  
Thy heart—and wouldest thou disacknowledge Me ?  
—And power, to break thy heart up like red land  
Clean to My Hand.”

“ Nay, Lord,” he cried,  
“ My Master and my Friend !  
Nay, nay, not only Thee,  
But give me one whom I may bend  
With love’s great burden and my heart extend ! ”  
God laughed : gave readily :  
“ How long ? ” said He.

## PRIVILEGE

“ **W**HAT clothes are these ? ” said Peter at the Gate ;

“ As ye were born, alone ye enter here,  
Clad on with truth, which is as water clear,  
And purity as the air delicate,  
Come ye of lowly estate ! ”

“ What hopes are these ? ” said Peter at the Door ;

“ Hopeless ye enter into this, God’s Place,  
Being full of fear, like fire before God’s face,  
As ye were born in good works very poor,  
Ye sinners come before ! ”

ST. C.

**G**OD giveth man  
All beauteous things,  
That he may learn to lose them well,  
Proving he can,  
Mid many ruinings,  
Stand sure himself and with true laughter dwell  
On love that death may not dispel.

## " THAT HE BE DRAD "

I HAVE been half-afraid,  
I have been wholly sad,  
Since pleasure which I made  
Brings not the joys I had  
Ere foolish I delayed  
God's pleasure, need,  
Which vexed my heart indeed,  
But left my spirit glad.

I have been half-afraid  
And wholly in despair,  
Since love which I assayed  
Proves not the hopes it bare,  
Ere foolish I betrayed  
God's love that rent  
My heart up like a tent,  
But left His Spirit there.

## THE STAR FIELDS

**B**RIGHT cowslipped roods,  
Grass-brilliant acres,  
Where each wind broods  
—Light glory-shakers !

Censer-swung and teeming gold,  
Sacred blossoms manifold !  
—Where like monks the hooded winds  
Kneel, and like rich music rolled  
Organ-silences unfold !

And the Lady kneeling, dim,  
Harkens to the lustrous hymn  
And the dark Priest beautiful—  
Lifts her veil to look at him  
—Fields with white mists all a-swim !

Fields of the night,  
Deep-cowslipped, yellow—

## THE STAR FIELDS

Brilliant with buttercup  
O'erfloating tall,  
Golden and flowermeal-scattering,  
Honey-mellow,  
Or, 'neath the moonbeam's flattering,  
Virginal,  
White like snow's fall.

(Fields of the day,  
Hot lustrous leagues,  
Goldmeal-ahaze,  
Blue hyacinth-flooded,  
Where walking gay  
The sun fatigues,  
And the nun-moon prays,  
Wan, silvery-hooded.)

Fields of the night,  
All primrose-sprent,  
Breeze-fluttered, boon,  
Bright-blossoming, shady,  
Where walketh, white  
With languishment,  
The crippled moon,  
Pale, piteous lady !

Clear voice of waters, silver tongue  
—Thin waters over pebbles playing,  
Pale-glimmering—and the voice was young  
—What was the slender lady saying  
While darkness like a lover hung ?

Brooks of the night,  
Gray waters flowing,  
Tissue-bright—  
And silver-strowing,  
'Twixt knowing Love  
And strength unknowing !

## THE STREAM O' DOON

**A**S I went by the stream o' Doon,  
Where the brown warbler cheeps an' chups,  
I' the stream I saw another afternoon  
With all its flowery cups.

All green wi' grass that none could mow,  
So rank and green and beautiful,  
An' the flowers they grew so delicate below :  
Not even time could cull.

And oh ! such skies ! and " Oh ! " said I,  
" That afternoon can never pass ! "  
But a breeze it came down, dim an' witheringly,  
Like breath upon a glass.

'Twas upside down that world apart,  
That fickle vanished afternoon !  
An' I said, " God bless my silly channering heart ! "  
Beside the stream o' Doon.

## DREAMS

**C**LOSE and sweet they crowd upon me,  
Soft rich notes of deep bird-piping,  
Cool and mellow breath of blossoms  
From their lustrous unstirred bosoms  
Quietly as a spirit slipping,  
And the warble of low waters  
Feeling through the silent rushes,  
In a dream mysterious tripping  
—Soft as trip old Ladon's daughters  
Lest they stir, as they flow by them,  
Finger-dipping pendulous bushes,  
And some uncouth Satyr spy them !

Thick and fast they crowd upon me,  
Rapid wild sweet waves of dreaming,  
And through burning odorous hazes  
Peer upon me lovely faces  
Bubble-like down waters streaming !  
In a moment I have builded  
Palaces of cool green splendour

Washed about by rivers teeming,  
Diamond-towered and star-gilded,  
For one lovely maid that stayeth ;  
But before embraces tender  
All to ruin soft decayeth.

Visions swell and break upon me—  
I am sand to their foam-curving,  
And beneath their snowy whisper  
All my being waxes crisper ;  
Far to Lapland regions swerving !  
There I brood the wizard-master,  
In high-pilèd sea-green mansion,  
Lustrous, resonant, voice-unnerving :  
White and cold as alabaster  
Blue-haired ice-maids pause before me,  
But before my heart's expansion.  
Melt and sadly I deplore me.

Strewn with rosy spray upon me  
Falls an airy pendulous breaker—  
I am rapt to glassy ledges,  
Narrow-terraced mountain edges,

Where the wind is loud earth-shaker !  
And through crag-hung clouds, unblinded  
By the arrowy light that splinters  
From the smitten rocks, glad seeker  
I behold in shadow-brinded  
Vale my prey, and plunge to choose her,  
From the height of stagnant winters  
Eagle-like—but wake and loose her !

## THE WOODMAN

**D**OUBTING the woodman leans upon his axe  
—To catch the Nightingale's first flutings  
low!

And with his horny hand's back wipes his brow  
Of the salt sweat, and feels his heart relax,  
And all its strength run down like melting wax,

And his crude wood-life reeling from him now !

And wets his palm and strikes a sterner blow,  
Chiding his heart, until the tall tree cracks !

Then in the cool of evening walking home,  
Again he hears adown the gloaming glade  
The rapt outburst which made his heart afraid ;  
And smiles to see his rosy children come,  
Racing to win his axe and kisses, from  
His cottage doorway glowing through the shade.

## MY MOTHER

(DIED APRIL 19, 1915)

DEAR Mother, why when I remember thee  
Hath loss no bitterness, no pangs regret ?  
Oh ! why do I so happily forget  
How I so little strove to keep life free  
From trouble's toils—nay rather, thoughtlessly  
Flung trouble o'er thee, a death-weighted net  
And watched thee hapless perish there ? And yet,  
Sweet Mother, still thou smilest so on me.

At first I did beseech thy spirit come  
And with upbraiding rend my heart, and tear  
Sorrow's quick growth with sorrow's constant  
share,  
Lest it should close my heart in like a home.  
For so, methought, grief only can o'ercome  
Grief—till I saw thee smiling, Mother dear.

## THE VALLEY OF DESOLATION

THE pines to their turrets are shaken,  
The wind, blithe old sexton, is clanging  
Their beautiful bells :  
The music goes leaping and hanging,  
Like apes, down the valley forsaken,  
And cheerily answering echoes  
Ring back from invisible cells—  
Where wan Desolation  
With weird invitation  
Inscrutably dwells.

But shouldst thou set foot in the valley,  
And tempted by love or by anger  
Shouldst linger and stay,  
Too soon will the bells lose their clangour,  
For breath the old sexton will dally,  
Then toll from the shuddering belfry  
The knell of dismay :  
And well wert thou guarded,  
If still unrewarded  
Thou winnest away !

## TO DESPAIR

AN ODE

D AUGHTER of Sorrow unto Failure born,  
Sweet only sister, delicate Despair,  
Amid thy towery brethren Virtue fair,  
Strong Courage and Success, and Hope forlorn :  
—Thou whom that amorous Roman once preferred  
In Egypt; thou whose tender voice was heard  
By Chatterton between his bursts of song,  
When all his dolorous woodland dripped with  
wrong,  
And his bright stars were in their courses blurred.

O thou sweet charmer, whom 'tis death to kiss,  
And death to woo and death to disregard,  
Death to invite at all, death to retard,  
Sure death to have and certain death to miss,  
Death to remember and forget, alack !

O thou!—glad Orpheus' hapless looking back  
—His lost Eurydice—Love's haunting ghost,  
—Life's weary sail and ever-fading coast  
—Death's mistress and his horror brooding black!

How long I feared to look upon thy face,  
Deeming it haggard, woebegone and wild,  
And with closed eyes was fain to be beguiled  
By thy soft-warbled mysteries, to pace  
As thy blind priest along the sacred grove  
And in the sweetest awe which is not love,  
Or being love was more of worship, dwell  
Upon each oft-repeated syllable  
That never could its full of sweetness prove.

But now I have unbound thy fragrant hair,  
And blinded with its darkness my faint eyes:  
Around my throbbing throat one long loop lies,  
Love's tender-strangling halter, knotted there!  
Upon thy lovely languid face how long  
I looked, till looking in a passion strong  
Grew blind with envy! But thy hair blew in  
Between thy lips and mine, a barrier thin  
But most availing—sweet Despair, how long?

So sadly did you answer to my call,  
Like music over weary waters blown  
From lands where happiness remains alone,  
While round the seaward ship the shadows fall ;  
And ah ! so sweetly did you look and smile,  
As on the lofty stern a proud exile  
Still looks towards his country, breaking through  
His generous rage with all his heart's adieu,  
Guessing at her imagined capes the while.

## BOAR'S HILL

THE Knight of Wootton harked to the tale,  
And his eyes grew bright and his face grew  
hale,  
And he cried with his great glad voice of old  
To his ready Page in buff and gold :  
“ Call me huntsman and horse and hound,  
And wind me the horn with a merry sound !  
For they say a boar has showed his teeth  
Among the thickets of Tommy's Heath ;  
And we will hunt, through glade and fell,  
Over the hills to Sunningwell.”

The Knight of Wootton gat him to horse,  
And they beat the woods and they beat the gorse.  
They hunted far and they hunted wide,  
But never a tusky boar they spied.  
They rode by Chillswell to Oxenford,  
And the hounds turned back of their own accord.

They stirred the hart and they stirred the hare  
Over the Hurst. No scent was there.  
And they rode and scattered, as it befell,  
Over the hills to Sunningwell.

The Knight of Wootton checked his roan  
Close on the hounds. He rode alone.  
—For he saw them lean their muzzles blue,  
And pause as they rushed the thickets through.  
He heard them mutter, he heard them break,  
And he laughed aloud at the musical sound.  
He saw their bristling chines awake ;  
Merrily his horn he wound,  
And cleared the shallow brook at a bound,  
And laid his mare out low and long  
Over the mossy crackling ground.  
He followed fast, for the scent was strong ;  
And he laughed aloud at the musical sound.

The Knight of Wootton was old and gray,  
Haggard and sick and woebegone ;  
But you had said he was young that day  
As he rode ahead and he rode alone.  
For his cheek was ruddy, his eye was bright,  
And he sate in the saddle firm and light ;

And his mighty back was no more bowed,  
And his breast grew broad as he laughed aloud,  
Tossing his tasselled hunting-cap ;  
And he held his spear without a strap  
With hand as firm as a boy's might be  
—A hand that a breeze had seemed to blow,  
Blow like the branch of a poplar tree  
But few short dismal hours ago.  
And he tarred his hounds with words of grace,  
And he leaned to his mare's pricked ears to tell  
Sooth and praise, as she kept her pace,  
Galloping up from Sunningwell.

The Knight of Wootton breathed again,  
And his heart came back to him that day ;  
And only he drew the bridle rein  
When the hounds had brought their foe to bay,  
And the boar hunched there had showed his teeth  
Down in the hollow by Tommy's Heath,  
And torn the hounds as they made assay.  
He patted his panting mare, and leaped,  
Lightly leaped from the saddle bow,  
Where men had lifted him old and heaped  
But few short dismal hours ago.  
And he ran through the bleeding hounds and smote,  
Strongly smote with his mighty spear,

The boar to heart through his bristly coat,  
'Twixt jowl and shoulder clean and clear.  
Then a moment he leaned on the quivering shaft,  
A moment brief, and lightly laughed,  
And slowly bended his hoary head  
And over the stricken boar fell dead.  
And the hounds came round and licked his hands,  
And the roan mare whinnied, sad to tell,  
And there came a sound of his hunting bands  
Gathering up from Sunningwell.

The Knight of Wootton was old and dead  
When Ralph, the Huntsman, lifted him up.  
“ This was the death to die ! ” he said,  
And shook from his eye the heavy drop.  
Then he put his horn to his lips a-cold,  
And a mournful huntsman’s call he wound ;  
And the slender Page in buff and gold  
Wept aloud at the musical sound :  
—Wept aloud, though his heart was bold  
And long had chidden the gathered tear ;  
And he hid not now the tears that rolled  
As he kissed the lips of his master dear.

The Knight of Wootton is armed and laid  
In the Chappelle old by Lamborough Hill,

And his face looks happy and unafraid  
In the candle light so tall and still.  
At his head shall be a carven hound,  
At his feet a boar.—But they ring the bell,  
And far is carried the musical sound  
Over the hills to Sunningwell.

## THE STRINGLESS LYRE

### I

SAD tuneless lyre, above thy widowed shape  
Haunts music like the shadow of thy lord,  
And thou from Silence canst no more escape  
    Nor Silence leaves thee of his own accord,  
Strong undesired lover. Who hath left  
Thee lorn of resonant strings and so bereft  
Of native strength to strike his bended nape  
    With all the sunsure aim of one bright chord ?

### II

Yet who dares take the sweetest chords he can,  
    And pitying string thy weary frame once more,  
—Not for his own unhallowed tunes to span ?  
    Can he thy wonted master-hand restore,  
Who haply, knowing what thy fate would be,  
Doomed thee to silence, but still made thee free  
From lesser music and the prouder man,  
—Thee, that hadst borne such mighty themes  
    before ?

## III

Ah, who can tell who wooed thee long ago  
Till waves seemed breaking on a barren shore  
In all the anguish of their bitter snow,  
Running with melancholy fringes hoar  
Upon the rippled sand, and sighing dead ?  
—Who felt within his heart the passion dread,  
The harsh insistent grains of bitter woe  
That peaceful song makes pearls of evermore ?

## IV

Belike blind Homer's magic hand of old  
Swept battle o'er thee in soft thunders fine,  
Or with a dreaming finger uncontroll'd  
Touched thee to tender notes of love divine  
And sweet familiar household manners mild,  
Bare-headed Hector and his laughing child,  
Or hapless Helen when from Troy she told  
Her foe-friends in the Spartan battle line.

## V

Perchance the Lesbian found among thy strings  
The purest passion of her haunted song  
And sacred echoes of too lovely things,  
Or Aischylos his rugged music strong.

Alas ! the sane-sweet Attic days are dead,  
And all that marble splendour long since fled,  
And thou, amid Time's precious ruinings,  
Thyself almost to ruin dost belong.

## VI

Too full for music are these empty days ;  
    Too late for glory, since they hurry so ;  
Too sane for love's wise folly and life's praise ;  
    Too sure for happiness. Ah ! long ago  
Thou mightest yet have found a hand to save  
Thee fitly from thy doom, a singer grave,  
Shakespeare or Shelley, with his fearless lays—  
    But what bright trembler so could save thee now ?

## VII

Remain, quiet memory of the timeless past,  
    For unaccepted Silence still to woo,  
A sad Penelope : the years have cast  
    A hopeless sort of hope upon thee too.  
Still somewhere hangs that mighty bow undrawn ;  
Still sometime down the rosy tracks of dawn  
Unknown thy travelled lord returns at last ;  
    —Till then, brave patient Heart, till then, adieu !

## QUICUNQUE VULT

**A** LONG the woodland went that lonely fellow,  
With lady's features, tresses overlong,  
When flowers were scant and leaves were turning  
yellow ;  
And sorrowful his looks were unto song.

There was a seeming in the air,  
So never-to-be-satisfied a yearning,  
A sense of a sad finish everywhere,  
—He almost felt the leaves so slowly turning !  
—Dissatisfaction in the full fruition,  
A loss of growth that fullness brought like pain,  
The dullest end of dullest repetition,  
—He too felt Autumn like a gradual stain,  
Vain end of all things vain !

And slowly went that solitary fellow,  
With his sad lovely face and haunted eyes,  
When leaves hung scarce and last fruit over-mellow,  
And trees like antlers moved upon the skies.

There was weak anger in the air,  
An insufficiency the most appalling,  
Feckless rebellion trivial everywhere  
—He felt the last leaves' growing fear of falling !  
—A voice raised soundless against dissolution,  
And upon death a roused unbaffled dread,  
The purgeless pitiless end of long pollution,  
—He too had failed like this : he bowed his  
head,  
Dead, burying his dead !

Below the woodland slept that lonely fellow,  
With quiet contented face so very fair,  
Recking not of the ramping winds that bellow  
And toss about his leaf-entangled hair.

There was a sorrow in the air,  
A strength tremendous, furiously blowing  
Lest its great heart should burst for anguish  
there,  
—Surely he felt the new spring softly growing !  
A very tender sense of things forgotten,  
A memory very choice and very sweet,  
The incorruptible amid things rotten.  
—He will not hear the silly seasons fleet  
Meet passing at his feet !

## SEA-RUNE

I LOVE the flowerful hollows  
Beside the humming sea,  
Where sometimes the spray follows  
The winds in flaky glee,  
Whence sometimes the wind carries  
The breath of flowers he marries  
Back to the brideless sea.

I love the waving grasses  
Beyond the beaming waves,  
Where ocean never passes  
For all the quiet he craves,  
Where the white mists are weaving  
Soft dreams for his deceiving  
—Sweet wraith-pools of dead waves.

And there I would be dwelling  
Above the silent sea,  
When lowest-winds are telling  
That ancient mystery  
Of how the earth grew bridal  
With such a sore betidal,  
So sorrowful the sea.

I love the ledgy spaces  
Below the cropping crags,  
Where winds have eagle-faces  
And fetlocks like a stag's,  
    Where silence long was broken  
        Before a word was spoken,  
    And sound was ere the crags.

Where Ocean's threats the loudest  
Come muffled up like prayers,  
And all his triumph proudest  
Mounts moanful like despairs,  
    When in a careless passion  
        The crags in Idol-fashion  
    Gaze o'er the seeming prayers.

And there would I be dwelling  
Above the purposed sea  
When loudest winds are knelling  
That ancient prophesy  
    Of how the waves shall cover  
        Those careless crags all over,  
    And they beseech the sea.

## ITHURIEL

**C**RUSHED 'neath a weight of snow  
Bushes lie heaped and low ;  
The tall trees overhead  
White dust of thunder shed.  
—Lapses tremendous  
So fall and bend us.

We who were bent before,  
All our strength straining sore,  
How should we now sustain  
This gathered fall of pain ?  
—Angels, attend us !  
And God, defend us !

Burden so heaped and white,  
So weighed beyond our might,  
Who gave us strength to bear  
Or held the burden there ?  
—Strength so stupendous  
Could our hearts lend us ?

Snows melt, unshoulders pain,  
Proudly we rise again,  
And all our thanks dispel.

—*We* bore the burden well !

—Sad angels, shrive us !  
And God, forgive us !

## VENITE

**C**OME to the lands of happy weariness,  
Where folk with sweet pale faces and sad eyes  
Live as to softest music, and the press  
Of ritual toil is like a Sacrifice !

Come to the lands that to thy distant viewing,  
Like hot Arabian deserts, naked glow—  
And the thick business of constant doing  
Will never let the cheerful grasses grow.

Come to the deserts then and soon therefrom  
Thy fields of pleasure shall more wasteful seem.  
For once look back and thou shalt joyous come,  
Nor to look back again shalt ever dream.

## OCH HONE !

“ COME back,—come back to Erin ! ”  
Ye winds, why will ye cry,  
And ye sad birds go calling  
Across the cloudy sky ?

“ Come back—come back to Erin ! ”  
Ye seas, why will ye call,  
Until my tears run streaming  
And whisper as they fall ?

“ Come back—come back to Erin ! ”  
The green fields and the streams,  
The rain so softly falling,  
The sky so far that gleams ! ”

“ Come back—come back to Erin ! ”  
My thoughts why do ye press ?  
And thou, my soul, go sighing  
In such fond weariness ?

## OCH HONE !

Oh bring my heart from Erin,  
Ye winds and birds and seas  
Oh bring my heart from Erin,  
And let my soul have peace !

## COULOIR

### SNOW TEMPTATION

WHITE with snow the world is :  
—Have a care !

Sleepy death uncurled is,  
Prowleth there !  
Bright of acre,  
Open pasture,  
Unclaimed vasture !  
—Who shall dare ?

Clean inviting smoothness :  
—Ware to tread !  
Level untracked sootheness  
Calls ahead,  
Pure of passage !  
Letless travel !  
Ways unravel—  
Who will tread ?

## COULOIR

Big birds lightly cross it :  
—Mark it well !  
So doth hope engross it  
With a spell,  
    Firm for footing !  
Brittle places  
Show no traces !  
—Who can tell ?

All the level deep is,  
—Welladay !  
Cloying soft as sleep is,  
    Warm they say,  
    Tender fathoms,  
Hidden hollows  
—Ah ! who follows ?  
    Come away !

## THE BOXWOOD CUP

WHEN like a clear reflection all the world  
Shone through the water-white still April  
air,

He brought his lustrous bride between the pines  
—The fragrant pines. All mossy was the ground  
And broken through with brake-frond still uncoiled;  
Delicate like languor pale anemones  
Drooped o'er the placid sturdier primrose-tufts.  
Oh, how he loved to watch the cringing moss  
Win in like water 'twixt her silver toes,  
The daffodils bend broken like his heart  
Before her sweet choice stepping, and the trees,  
In their long brazen ranks, salute their Queen  
With motionless regard! Barefoot they clomb,  
Unsandalled like Delight who sometimes treads  
With bleeding feet and laughter mid the thorns.

And there beside the forest's edge they came  
Upon the pasture, and his native hut

All poled about with pine, and planked with fir,  
And thatched with braided bracken, and for door  
Hung with a mighty ox-hide thonged and barred  
And weighted with a beam in the broad hem.

Before the little hut they laid them down,  
He with his slender limbs already tanned  
And showing, where his shifted bear-skin looped  
At his new posture, the pure skin above  
The furthest pushed brown boundaries of the sun,  
And she all ivory fair, as though the sun  
Full fain had dared not ; his thick clustering curls  
Like darkness and his pine-tops, hers all gold.

Anon the little curious lambs would come  
And watch them bound together, bleating still,  
Then run back leaping to their anxious dams ;  
Or birds would settle on the neighbouring shrubs,  
But startled fly as those red lips once more  
Partook of mutual sweetness.

When the sun  
Had his red chin already on the west,  
He rose, bent down, with kisses raised her up ;  
And so till dusk they parted. He to tend  
His flocks strode out across the dewy grass,  
And she to set his supper went within.

Dim was her woodland palace when she looped  
The curtain back and, like a sweet white ghost

Belated creeping back to her still tomb  
When day already rolls into the sky,  
Slipped from the rosy twilight. And within  
She nothing saw at first but shadowy shapes,  
And in the westward wall upon the planks  
The knots dull rubious glowing, and red chinks  
Of light where'er the caulking wood and clay  
Had crumbled from the seams. But when her eyes  
Had widened to the darkness, she beheld  
His broad-strewn bed of bracken, and thereon  
A heavy-manèd tawny lion's hide ;  
And leaned beside the head his hunting spears  
With burnished edgy points and tapery shafts  
All notched and very curiously wrought.  
There hung his arrows fletched, his girdle thong  
With flask and scrip, and his forgotten pipe ;  
And, on a little shelf, fixed fungus-like  
Upon the central pine pole, proudly stood  
A boxwood cup carved o'er with lovely shapes  
And mellow legends, haply a fair prize  
That he among the shepherds of the dale  
Had won, from fellow swains all sick at heart  
And pitying old men's judgment ;—or perchance  
The hope-gift of some buxom shepherdess.  
And further showed a few fat skins of wine,  
A jar with white milk brimming, clear scooped gourds,

A pestle and a hollowed stone wherein  
Still rested a few broken grains of wheat,  
A canister for bread and lidded close ;  
And figs and raisins and things else unseen  
Along a low recess. Beside the door  
A blackened hollow with white ashes strewn  
Showed where the hearth danced when the brattling  
rain  
Forbade the woods for burning.

## On the turf

Beside the little track his feet had worn.  
She set his supper.

Suddenly he came  
Upon the gloom, and at his breast he bore  
A little weanling lamb. And glad at heart  
She ran to meet him, took the little lamb,  
And heard the Mother bleating come behind.  
Then, when the ailing creature was bestowed  
With its contented mother in the cote,  
They supper made; then leaning on his breast  
The while he fed her choice and rosy lips  
With frugal dainties, and with kisses oft,  
Breaking her pretty speeches and his heart.  
And, supper done at last, they went within,  
And from her pearly shoulder he unclasped  
Her vesture, and undid her fragrant zone,

And laid her down in her white loveliness  
Upon his bed. She with eye-worship watched  
Him loose his girdle and his bearskin coat,  
And godlike glow upon him through the gloom.

Soon round the beams beside them bright-eyed  
mice

Ran peeping unafeard, or pausing, washed  
Their little pointed faces, or perchance  
Strayed out upon the lion-hide and found  
A scattered grain of bread, and squatting up  
Held it in both their small unmannered hands  
Upon their nibbling mouths. For there they lay,  
Silent and wan like two faint lustrous clouds  
Upon a moonlight night, which the soft wind  
Commingles once below the watching stars,  
And dawn shall find them single evermore.

Now, on a languid summer day it chanced  
That, as he leaned staff-proped and watched her  
grind

The yellow wheat grains in the hollow stone  
To make the home-baked bread he loved so well,  
One came upon them with his languid limbs  
Thrown o'er the withers of a dappled mare,  
They being unwary till his shadow fell  
Almost like chill upon them. Richly dight

With jewels was the harness of his mare,  
And he in a fine broidered tunic clad,  
And gaitered sandals bound with gilded straps  
All crosswise to the knee and gartered fair.  
And he—a slender very graceful boy  
With golden curls, brow banded, and between—  
A handsome discontented face divine.  
“ Ho, shepherd ! ” cried he in a mellow voice  
That would have stirred the nymphs of Arcady.  
And in a proud humility, afraid,  
The shepherd answered, “ Good, my lord ! ”—He saw  
His bride’s bright eyes to take the stranger in.  
And then the Prince : “ Good lack, thou cheerless  
man !  
What better place with such a hostess sweet  
Could I have found to wile a tedious noon  
Away in. Take the mare ! ” Therewith he threw  
The reins upon the shepherd’s waiting hand,  
And lightly slipped to ground with all a faun’s  
Most subtle sinewy woodland grace, and all  
Of mortal beauty. Laughing still he spoke :  
“ Go tend thy flocks and mend thy rueful looks  
The while I play thy wooer in the shade,  
Till fitly and with gentle smiles renewed  
Thou comest to reclaim thy hapless bride.”  
So all noon long the rueful shepherd strode

Among his flocks—nay 'neath the forest eaves  
Concealed kept jealous watch upon his lord,  
Resenting almost that his modest wife  
So sweetly held at truth's firm length away  
The lovely prince, while he so little pressed  
Of treachery upon her.—Heard him praise  
The sweet white wheaten bread, and ground his  
    teeth ;  
For who should praise that wheaten bread but he ?  
—Watched her pour out the laughter-throated wine  
—His wine !—that she should pour it, well !—for  
    whom  
But him ?—to share the boxwood cup with her !  
—Enough ! At every motion the Prince made  
He drew an arrow to the barbèd point,  
Then at her smiles would turn the point on her  
—And slay himself a hundred thousand times  
For doubting !

        But when veiled evening came  
Upon the hot red desert of the west,  
Bearing aloft upon her steady brow  
The pitcher with sweet cool-drawn water filled,  
The Prince arose and wound his silver horn,  
A merry summoning. Right gladly then  
Crept back the shepherd through the darkling woods  
And came as from the pasture speeding up,

Led forth the mare and held the Prince's foot  
As lightly he bestrode her,—anxious he  
As the pawing mare to have his master gone.  
Then gaily called the Prince, waving adieu,  
And proudly down the woodland pranced away.

He marked her flushing cheek and brightened eyes,  
And she his frown and surly humour marked  
And first rebuked him lightly, asked him why  
He came so late returning from the flocks  
And had not served or shared the frugal meal,  
But left her there for host and hostess both,  
A double labour. Sorely he replied :  
“ I could not trust myself to sit beside  
Or stand behind him, lest my fingers grew  
Too strong, his throat too tempting.—Double toil ?  
—A single joy !—Thou gavest him more smiles  
Than honest serving needed !—I to share  
The meal—And did'st thou call me from the dale  
To share it ? Could I share thy pleasure too ?  
—Nay spoil it rather ! ” Angry then she grew.  
“ A proper husband thou to leave thy wife  
To meet temptation, if temptation was,  
Alone, since thou so little trust hast got  
In her behaviour ! Wherefore shouldst thou fear  
A better man than thou ? Belike thou hast

Another maiden whom thou callest wife,  
That so thou judgest." Bitterly she spake  
And went within to bed, while in the grass  
Sullen he lay and brooding—"Could the Prince  
So stoop? Alas! what need of stooping there?  
Ah, would she were less beautiful or I  
Less jealous!" Thus till all the pricking stars  
Like points of yellow envy filled the sky,  
And now the risen moon had paled them out  
To whiter passion, he lay brooding there.

Now bright Orion with his triple belt  
Held the mid skies, and bats like bitter thoughts  
That downward long below the drooping eaves  
Had hung suspended, fluttered on the air,  
—Such silly, darting, unsubstantial things,  
Twittering. He laughed, and felt upon his knees  
The chilly dews, and coldness in his hair.  
Shivering he rose ashamed, and light at heart  
With love unclouded like the sudden moon,  
And crept on tiptoe through the lowly door  
At last. She slept!—with one white arm out-  
spread  
Where his lorn neck should be, her other hand  
Rocked like a little gull upon her breast,  
And on her lips a happy smile for him  
Forgiven. Silently he doffed his skins

And lay down softly, kissed her parted lips,  
And also fell asleep. And still the moon  
Shone through the open doorway where the hide  
Hung gathered yet.

Now as he slept he dreamed  
That men came on him darkly in the night,  
And long he strove with them like Hercules ;  
Then by their numbers overpowered at last  
Was bound and mocked and beaten and left for dead.  
But with faint frenzied eyes he saw them bear  
His lovely, hapless, struggling wife away,  
And helpless into utter darkness fell.  
Ah, broken slumber !

Heavily he awoke  
When noon, that bright Colossus, strode the world,  
With pain like iron bands across his brow,  
Supine upon the ground, his comely head  
Bent back upon the hearth, his black hair filled  
Like age with ashes, and his aching sides  
All wealed and flecked and fleered with clotted blood.  
Dazed he awoke, far back in other days  
While still he was unwedded in the dale  
And singly went among his lambs and ewes.  
But soon he saw her raiment on the floor,  
And fragrant zone. Then memory came back  
With cruel anguish, like the surge of blood

To chafed stone-frozen limbs, or savage life  
Returning cruelly to hapless men  
Nigh drowned upon the shore, reluctant death  
Preventing.

Now he crawled on hands and knees,  
And threw himself face downward on the bed,  
And drummed with his dull feet, and with his hands  
Clutched and reclutched the tawny lion's mane.  
Then godlike from his sorrows he arose,  
Like young Poseidon rising first, serene  
To allay the storming waters ; filled his cup ;  
Drank the refreshing wine ; and spite of pain  
Stood upright on his feet. He took her zone  
And covered it with tears like stars between  
His rapid cloudy kisses. And then fled  
Far out upon the woodland, calling, calling,  
Until he fainting fell.

Now after noon  
His wondering flocks came browsing up the hill  
And found their shepherd lying stark asleep.  
The fond ewes nuzzled round him, and the lambs  
Thrust in against his flanks their woolly heads,  
Kneeling and flickering their happy tails  
As when they draw the sweet milk from their dams.  
—But when he stirred not, in a curious ring  
Stood sadly bleating, until evening fell.

## GRACE

“ **I** WAS the need of someone’s heart ;  
**I** was the heart of someone’s grief ;  
**I** was the grief of someone’s smart ;  
I was the smart of no one’s life.”  
Say this and to thy grave depart.  
If truly this thou canst not say  
Then shouldst thou fear to die to-day.

“ I was the friend of someone’s fear ;  
I was the fear of someone’s foe ;  
I was the foe of no one’s cheer ;  
I was the cheer of someone’s woe.”  
Say this to Death, and do not fear.  
If truly this thou canst not say,  
Then for a respite kneel and pray.

## TO MUSIC

SWEET Music, come upon me as thou wilt,  
All thundrous like the fall of waters vast,  
Or softly spilt  
Like stringèd drops of water tinkling fast  
Into melodious pools that seem  
The very gazing eyes of some delicious dream.

Or come in silence, hung with melody  
Like droppy trees when morning mists flewed low  
Are secretly  
By their four corners gathered, and the slow,  
Sweet operation of the day sucks up,  
Ere it can lightly fall, each lustre-tinted drop.

Or like still tears that make no sound at all,  
Save in the secret heart, how thick soe'er  
They haply fall  
For joy or more melodious sorrow there.  
Then from thy soundless ecstasy awake  
To the soft almost silence that the raindrops make.

Rise softly as the dews upon my soul ;  
For in thy sweetest hush I love thee best.  
My heart console—  
That cavepool still—with dewdrop-quiet unrest  
Of joy, or with the deeper-falling rain,  
The solace delicate of unconsolèd pain.

### SONG FROM "LIFE"

A H fond Regret !  
How like a river yet  
Thou dost reflect lost sweetness  
With more than all completeness—  
Ah sweet, ah fond Regret,  
That dost too much remember and so much forget !

Ah fond Regret !  
How like a cloud, dead-set,  
Thou dost obscure past trouble  
Lest it too well redouble—  
Oh sweet, oh fond Regret,  
That dost too much remember and too much forget !

## THE DREAM

**S**OFTLY came a dream to me,  
    Softly as a flower dispetals,  
Softly as a white owl settles,  
    Softly came to my life's tree.

Like a leaf that falleth light,  
Like a feather loosed in flight,  
Like a snowflake floating white  
    Softly dropped that dream from me.

Who can tell  
Where it fell ?

I have searched the airy region  
All about me with such passion,  
Feathers found and leaves in legion,  
But that melting snowflake never,  
Nor that leaf, nor petal falling,  
Nor a feather of that fashion ;  
I find only things that sever—  
At more searching more appalling  
—Me from my lost dream for ever.

## THE SEA

**F**AR out the glittering ripples ran,  
The quivering molten-metal sea,  
Beyond the broadening flats of tan  
Above the furnace none may scan  
Below the sunshine free.

And like hot steam the throbbing air  
Shook o'er that mighty molten flood,  
That night makes black and starry fair,  
Or like a cold quicksilver rare,  
And dawn turns into blood.

And day makes livid and pale gold,  
Yellow and tiger-black between,  
With silver-crashing waves unrolled  
—Visible thunders manifold,  
From furnacings unseen.

## HE

### A RIME OF PARALLELS

HAPPY he was,  
Till his selfish heart  
Seemed like a cloud  
Heavy and swart,  
And the little worm  
At his soul's dull core  
Mid the dust of her boring  
Stirred once more.

Sorry he was,  
Till the clouds of woe  
So tenderly let  
The sunshine thro',  
And his hollowed soul  
Like an apple fell  
For new bloom to break  
And fresh fruit to swell.

Wise he was,  
Till his haughty mind  
Came upon death  
And bowed behind,  
And the lazy snake,  
Coiled in his brain,  
Casted his slough  
And coiled again.

Doubtful he was,  
Till the pride of death  
Stooped like love  
To his mind beneath,  
And faith arose  
From his brain, awake,  
And set his heel  
On the plaited snake.

## CREATION DAYS

### LAUDATE

*CHERUBIM.* God stretched His hand upon the brooding dark,

*Seraphim.* Glory in the Highest, Glory and Worship be !

*Cher.* —And light was kindled like a spark  
Among the shadows of Eternity.

*Ser.* Praise be to God, eternal Praise,  
For this, the Kindling and the First of Days !

*Ch.* God frowned upon the undivided flood,

*Ser.* Glory in the Highest, Glory and Worship be !

*Ch.* And like a lofty ceiling stood  
The purple firmament inviolably.

*Ser.* Praise be to God, eternal Praise  
For this, the Sundering, Second of His Days !

*Ch.* God looked upon the waters gleaming wide,

*Ser.* Glory in the Highest, Glory and Worship be !

*Ch.* And laughing waters leaped aside,

    And earth was bridal earth, sea bridegroom sea.

*Ser.* Praise be to God, Eternal Praise.

    For this, the Gathering, and the Third of Days !

*Ch.* God smiled upon the firmament forlorn,

*Ser.* Glory in the Highest, Glory and Worship be !

*Ch.* And night and day like twins were born,

    With sun and moon for crowns continually.

*Ser.* Praise be to God, eternal Praise

    For this, the Enthroning, and the Fourth of  
        Days.

*Ch.* God touched His lips, and in the waters moved—

*Ser.* Glory in the Highest, Glory and worship be !

*Ch.* —Great whales, and from the waters roved

    All flocks of wingèd fowl in their degree.

*Ser.* Praise be to God, eternal praise

    For this, the Assorting and the Fifth of Days.

*Ch.* God sighed, and from the earth arose—

*Ser.* Glory in the Highest, Glory and worship be !

*Ch.* —Amid the fragrant forest's rich repose,  
Creature and creeping thing innumerably.

*Ser.* Praise be to God, eternal Praise  
For this, the Haunting and the Sixth of Days !

*Ch.* God wept—and from that moment man was  
made,

*Ser.* Glory in the Highest, Glory and Worship be !

*Ch.* Ah so Breath-brilliant and so dust-afraid,  
Godlike and earthborn intermittently !

*Ser.* Praise be to God, eternal Praise  
For this, the Keening and the Last of Days.

## SATURN

**H**OW golden were the days that I regret,  
'Ere Boyhood like a Saturn feckless fell  
Out of my life, and his ambitious child,  
Manhood, the blind usurper, there had set  
Like Jove his jealous sovereignty—to dwell  
In constant dread of his own children wild,  
His Hopes and Fears and Passions and Despairs,  
Huge Titans ! building still against his lot  
Their mountainous ascent of monstrous cares,  
Though he in wrath had smitten them and piled  
Torments upon them but subdued them not.

Ah Saturn ! very golden were those days,  
And like a happy legend to be read  
In antique language and time-mellowed phrase  
Between the broidered margins of old books ;  
Or like a quiet religion long since dead,  
Which one discovers with still pious looks

Haply among the littered leaves of time,  
And, brooding on quaint rites and worship spent  
And broken sanctities, dreams off, sublime  
    Of prayer soft-murmuring out like water-brooks,  
    And raisèd hands, and sweet admonishment.

—The woodland space, the native kneeling throng,  
The flower-strewn silence, the slow-swaying priest,  
    The Altar stooked with sweet-wood faggots fine,  
The fragrance of the oils thick poured, the strong  
    Quick holding of the breath, the hearts increased,  
    The sudden kindling of the fire divine !  
Hark ! now the priest intones the mystic prayer  
    And on the crackling wood and flame full-stored  
Sprinkles the hissing leaves, till all the air  
    Thickens ; and through the solemn prayer's  
        confine  
The little kid bleats straining at his cord.

Ah ! golden days when Boyhood like a Priest  
To Life's high altar haled his victim shy,  
    His Innocence, and soon with solemn prayer  
Kindled his fragrant joys, not with the least  
    Repugnance heard that bleating faintly die !  
    Nor sickened that sweet smoke upon the air ;

But mid his piping hopes and dancing throng  
Of unforeseeing thoughts high cloyed and glad,  
And seeming-sacred ecstasies of song,  
Watched with rapt eyes consume to ashes there  
His life's best gift mid all the joys he had.

## THE SLEEPER

**A**WAKE! although thy dreams are passing sweet,  
And day to thee like everlasting night  
A brooding cherub whose soft pinions meet  
Enfolding stars and shadowy delight  
Above thee, still awake! The day is bright  
And thou, fond slumberer, losest more than dreams  
E'er brought in their dim unsubstantial might,—  
The glory of the leaves, the birds, the streams,  
    The flower's fragrance fine,  
    The cloudy pomp divine,  
The sun and shadows dancing on his beams,  
    The silent strength that broods  
    From mountained solitudes  
And like the mighty soul of music seems,  
    And the fine spirit which doth move  
Through all, the enkindling soothing Breath of  
    Love.

Awake ! for evening fills the freckled skies  
Already : thou hast dreamed the noon away !  
And like a sweetness wooing slumber lies  
    About the fountains of the birds that play  
    Against the tender spell and will not stay—  
Admonishment for thee that sleepest still  
    And hast not borne the love-heat of the day—  
Awake before the shadows from the hill  
        Wedge farther the black night  
        Into the rosy light,  
And darkness drains the pale green calms that fill  
    From oceans of the west  
    The shallow loveliest  
Hollows of sky, and the first stars distill  
    Their liquid glories delicate—  
Ah slumberer, thou awakenest too late !

Sleep on ! for gathering her sable robe  
    Night fills the vacant throne of regal day,  
His widowed consort, 'neath the moon's pale globe,  
    Amid her starry court ; but puts away  
    The heavy business—what her minions say  
Being but like the senseless drone of wind  
    Or wordless talk of waters hurrying gray.

Below the sombre vaulting of her mind,  
As in the pregnant gloom  
Of his mysterious tomb,  
Lies her dead lord, and there she leans to find  
All that death still can tell  
To make her miserable,  
To kiss the cold responseless lips unkind,  
And in grief's utter loneliness  
To win strange solace from her grief's excess.

Thou couldst not wake ! Death had thee in his  
keeping !  
And is death gentle that thou smilest so  
Through lovely visions of that silent sleeping  
And shadowy darkness ? Warm and soft, as  
snow  
With his white fatal blanket, slumber slow  
Covers thee still ? Then I so well contented,  
Poor fool, bent down to kiss thy tender brow  
Good-night. 'Twas marble-cold ! And so demented  
Beyond all anguish wild,  
Cold, griefless, piteous-mild,  
As one endrowsed with opiates heavy-scented,  
I gazed upon the bed  
Whence death so surely had fled,  
—Till life seemed all by laughter circumvented.

I shook my fingers on the air,  
And laughed upon the heavens in gay despair.

Thou canst not die ! My heart like Hercules  
Hath wrestled for thee through the dreary day,  
Till he hath bended death back on his knees  
And rescued thee Alkestis-like away,  
And bidden thee good-night, as well he may,  
Knowing that morning still shall see thee rise  
Like Aphrodite through the creaming spray,  
With all Spring's loveliness within thine eyes !  
And in a sweet unrest  
Through long night, undistressed,  
He watches for thy first awakening sighs ;  
Nor hath he drooped his head,  
Though night, unwidowèd  
Hath left her throne—for dawn is in the skies  
And rosily her lord doth break  
Death's bonds ! O happy slumberer, awake !

TO K. R.

KILLED IN ACTION, SEPTEMBER 25, 1915

**N**OW Autumn hath unfrocked the rooted trees  
And life is all bare branches to be seen ;  
The old year broodeth in a quiet disease  
With moanful gust and fretting rain between ;  
Thick-strewn with leaves lie all the ways below  
And clog my feet with death where'er I go ;  
And all is peaceless melancholy peace  
And moody, dismal, dire unrest serene.

Thou comest not to fill the aching year,  
As thou wast wont, with love and laughter still,  
Till death's dark face was filled with pious cheer,  
And all was very fair that seemed so ill,  
And little but her leaves the year had shed,  
And nothing but death's deathless self seemed dead  
—Thou canst not come ! And when the skies  
grow clear  
Not even Spring shall those void spaces fill.

Thou was not fitted for the stress of war ;  
Thy heart was tuned to kinder happier days.  
And yet, alas ! the ruddy warrior-star  
So closely on thy horoscope did graze,  
And violence arose to claim thee, though  
Thou never couldst her proper fury know  
—And then the loving Gods that jealous are  
Clipped off amain thy destined length of days.

Though time the ruthless had been slow to take,  
By thy sweet ruth so happily subdued,  
And envious Death forgot his rage to slake,  
Being by thy goodness moved to gentle good,  
Or, lest by one dire blow he should deprive  
Even selfish life of all its wish to live,  
And all his bitter joy unsavour'd make,  
Had held from thee his twitching hardihood.

The brooding Gods had all forgotten quite  
That thou on earth, or they in heaven were,  
And needed not to take for their delight,  
So much they loved to look upon thee here  
In bright abode of bliss, which thou hadst made.  
Nor maddened they at man's bold and unafraid  
Worshipful love, and only used their might  
To save thee from war's further anguish drear.

Thee, to whom it was bitterness indeed  
To stretch thy hand for blood against a foe,  
Or call him foe for whom thy heart could bleed  
Still from the undelivered wounds of woe.  
Yet thou didst shrink not from the sword, to fight  
For hapless Freedom and beleaguered Right,  
But bend thy pity like a fiery steed  
And thus into the thickest battle go.

And, lacking strength of arm, wast stronger still  
Of soul, and lacking heart hadst courage more  
The heart for slaughter, not the heart to fill  
For Truth's bright cause and Honour threatened  
sore,  
And lacking thought for Glory, unto us  
The slaves of Glory, wast more glorious;  
And lacking hope for gain, with stouter will  
Did'st follow Peace for banner evermore.

What need for tears? For thou hast peace indeed;  
The Gods have given thee thy heart's desire.  
If thou still payest us a gentle heed,  
Knowing the ashy end of this vast fire,  
Pity no longer fills with tears thine eyes,  
But a proud joy for men's great sacrifice  
That still they make and wot not of the meed  
Beyond all price of pain which they acquire.

Yet not thy peace thou soughtest. Thou wouldest  
fain

Forgo thy peace to save a single tear,  
And I, lest yet I give thy spirit pain,  
Even from my o'er-mastering tears forbear,  
Ah foolish hope, that so I could beguile !  
A little while, brave heart, a little while  
For my sad self my tears shall flow again,  
Till through joy's tears once more I see thee clear.

The winds arise and all the leaves are blown  
From their dark rings below the stark stripped  
trees,

Till to each tree his own leaves are unknown  
And he forgets the fall by slow degrees ;  
But mid the heaving roots through bores blown  
plain

The underflood spouts bubbling and again  
Sucks back. So from my flooded heart alone  
Grief wells and sinks and ever has increase.

### EPIGRAM

MOTHER of many virtues, rueful war,  
Of virtues that to Peace were better born ;  
—O praise not War that these her children are ;  
Blame rather Peace for barrenness forlorn.

## SONNETS

### I

CICERO

AH ! Cicero, they clipped thy silver tongue  
And filled thy head with far less precious  
gold,  
Who by the sweetness of thy voice were stung  
Or thy long booming periods ocean-rolled.  
Thou hadst indeed a mighty voice ; but thou  
Hadst also a weak woman-soul and vain  
Mismated to the man-strength of thy brow—  
And these for ever held thy life in twain.  
Thou hadst a gentle heart for kinder things  
Which thy uneasy soul would not allow,  
But urged thee to the majesty of kings,  
That brittle-bending, fruit-o'er-burdened bough !  
Too proud thou wert for happiness to please,  
Too vain for aught save splendour's sore disease.

## II

VIRGIL

**T**HY long hexameters come booming in  
Filled by the stately memories of Rome :  
—And as a lonely traveller far from home,  
Who listens to the sea's snow-thundrous din,  
And sees the fringy waves come rushing thin  
Up the slope sand, within the glassy dome  
Of dream half hears a foaming battle come,  
Before his dearer homeland fancies win :—

So, happy Mantuan, I think of thee  
Upon thy farm amid the Sabine hills,  
Watching perchance the rich-turned fallow  
loam,  
Or pruning back the headstrong apple tree,  
Or listening while at dusk the beehive fills  
—Through that immortal thunder which is  
Rome.

### III

#### BATTLE

**A**S dives a black wind down upon the sea  
Came all the dark Rutulian chivalry,  
Athwart Æneas' brazen ranks, relying  
Upon their chieftain's eagle heart and eye,  
Who in their foremost rank, with red plume flying  
And haughty sanguine face and voice defying,  
Rode—Turnus!—in his golden panoply.  
And soon like arrows on the air went sighing  
The thick souls of the slaughtered, sobbing by  
The sad reluctant spirits of the dying,  
The anxious groaning souls that could not fly,  
But strove for death—for all that dismal crying  
Of passing souls against their foolish trying  
To leave such happy anguish and to die.

. IV

WINTER

THE big blot-breasted thrushes, winter-puffed,  
Brood in the snow all hungry, silent, huffed,  
And grudging of the songs they used to sing  
So slenderly all through the love-tide Spring.  
Good lack ! Day closes in below the night.  
Stir up the pilèd faggots, fragrant, bright,  
The while I call, like children round my knee,  
Sweet recollections of my infancy,  
And listen to their stories, happier than  
The child that listens to the grown-up man,  
Their fond sad father. Ever could I gaze  
Upon the glowing embers and still trace  
Clear tracks that all across my memory go,  
Soft as the print of birds' feet in the snow.

V

REVIVAL

**H**OW sweet it is idly to lie again  
Within a fringe of shadow shepherdwise,  
And gaze unseeing into the deep skies,  
And feel below thick thoughts the placid brain  
Like a still pool quick-ringed with rustling rain,  
Till even that soft rain of thinking dies,  
And dream, the blue kingfisher, flaming flies  
Reflected, very delicate and plain.

Ah ! calm cool water, what sweet nymph is this  
Who creeps between the drooping willow trees,  
And smiles upon her image that doth please,  
And puts her fingers down for you to kiss,  
And bending dives to meet your startled bliss  
And break your levels with such ecstasies ?

## VI

### THE WIDOW

WHEN Evening with her low-suspended pails  
At length had from the milking slowly come  
Across the silent water-meadows home  
To her cool dairy down the glimmering rails,  
And in broad shallow crocks had duly set  
The milk for daybreak's skimming, and had blown  
Her failing lantern out, and late had flown  
To find her generous lover waiting yet—

I saw fresh stars yellow and blue and white,  
Flame out like crocuses in fields that are,  
And then below the cloudy eaves of night  
The still moon from her lattice peer afar :  
—Alas ! why tarrieth her lord so bright ?  
—And at her breast a little lonely star.

## VII

### NIGHTFALL

HOW like a strewn rose day is faded quite,  
And those red petals turned an ashen white,  
And like a robin down the fallen leaves  
One star comes out upon the littered night.  
Sleeping upon his back old Ocean heaves  
His mighty breast, and all the shore receives  
His spreading locks awave, and slumber light  
More slumber from his hoary breathing weaves.

Soon in bright ranks like nuns the stars receive  
The hooded moon, their abbess, spirit-pale,  
—In one wan group apart the holy Seven  
Awaiting Sisters.—Nay, but she doth grieve  
And secret wend beyond redemption's pale  
Below the thick fruit-laden boughs of heaven.

## VIII

### FULL MOON

THE moon, night's pale dissembler, fills the sky  
With semblance wan of underlighted day  
—Of cloudless day, when ghostly eclipses lie  
Upon the sun. But in their thinned array  
Those unabashed and boldest stars refuse  
To countenance the feckless fond pretence,  
And stand for truth against the time's abuse,  
Though death at last should be their recompense,  
—Loyal chiders of the moon's extravagance,  
Of night's own royalty the subjects true,  
Proud scorner of the rosy day's advance,  
Yet deigning not to share with him the blue  
Enstraitened heavens, but smiling in the night  
Far up beyond his farthest reach of light.

## IX

### SELF'S MIDDLEMAN

L IKE misremembered phantoms of a dream,  
Or teasing forms which travelling clouds will  
take

And, ere they full discover what they seem,  
Confuse again and new half-semblance make,  
I brood upon the pleasures of days fled  
By sweet retail of pleasure to obtain  
In shrewd and prosperous trafficking, instead  
Of their old wholesale value, a clear gain.  
Alas ! for such a business I lack skill,  
Or those bright goods have altered by their keeping ;  
I cannot find an unsoiled pleasure still  
For all my diligent search and bitter weeping ;  
But on the tiering shelves lies many a woe :  
—Clearly as ever and freshly still they glow !

X

SONNET TO . . . —I

**B**RAVE heart, though well we know thou wouldest  
not be

Remembered, if remembering brings us pain,  
Still though our hearts oft broken break again  
Thereat, again we must remember thee.  
Yet is thy Spirit and our conscience free,  
Since all the anguish which our tears contain  
Is sweeter unto us and shall remain  
Sweeter than happy life's forgetful glee.

Brave heart, bright Spring renews the first void  
year

Since thou hast gone upon death's wintry way,  
And all the April skies are cloudy-clear,  
And trees have shaken out their green array ;  
But at my eyes intrudes a sudden tear  
—Alone this year I enter into May !

## XI

### SONNET TO . . . —II

**A**ND more!—Thou hast become our monument  
To single duty and to courage high,  
Our sword when cloudy sloth is gathering by,  
Our shield when fear comes—our strong battlement,  
Our rally when our utmost force is spent,  
Our strong decision when strong doubt is nigh,  
Our wings of daring through the windy sky,  
Our shelter from the vengeful element.

O mighty living, O dead mightier friend,  
When heavy storming skies break in above,  
Or languid noons with soft temptation bend,  
Our ready proof that ne'er we need to prove!  
—Wherefore, for our own sakes and honour's end,  
We must remember still, but most for love.

## XII

### PROTEUS

I FOUND old Proteus lying far and dry  
Above the weedy pastures of the sea,  
And fell upon him with a purpose sly,  
And hugged his slippery sides in mighty glee.  
Then into fluent hope first turnèd he :  
I held him. Sharp despair he then did try  
In vain—as hot desire had mastered me  
Had he not foolish changed to greed thereby !

Fainting I thought of his wise fables old  
And all that I at last seemed nigh to win.  
He turned to mocking laughter hard to hold ;  
But still I held him by a margin thin.  
I cried in triumph then—alas ! too bold :  
—He turned to love, fled seaward and dived in.

## XIII

### RETROSPECT

**A**S one who climbs a mountain and soon stands  
Upon the lofty ledges which he braves,  
High shores to which the rolling winds are waves,  
Then backward looks upon the sunny lands,  
The woods, the valleys, and the silver bands  
Of river and rich fields that he enslaves,  
And with a new-discovered beauty saves  
From valley-weariness his heart's demands—

So all alone my sorry heart looks back  
On childhood which she once found all as sad,  
Consoling foolish age's better lack  
With fancied joys that childhood never had,  
Forgetting that upon the steep up-track  
Are true demanding joys to make her glad.

## XIV

### THOUGHT

LIKE dancing gnats that twitch the waters  
bright,  
Like drake-stones lightly skipping out of sight,  
Like rapid swallows' soft-impinging speed,  
Like placid stately swans slow-floating white,  
Like moor-fowl diving deeply from the reed,  
Like leaping trout with all his maily breed,  
Upon the levels of the mind with might  
Comes thought—from fancy to deep stir indeed !  
And like a leaf some thoughts are borne away,  
And like an oary bird some thoughts will stay  
Against the current, and like fishes some  
Live darkly in the water day by day  
—Till chance, the happy fisherman, shall come  
And draw them gleaming from their hidden home !

## XV

FROM . . . TO . . . —I

**F**AR up the slopes of sleep I walked with thee  
    Beyond the narrow ridges that divide  
Destruction from destruction, on each side  
Chasmed obscure, o'erhung precipitously  
—Faint paths which still direct my soul set free  
    To that wan-shadowed realm where those abide  
Who hasted not for glory when they died,  
But waited if perchance they still might see  
Their living friends in those dark borders walk,  
    Strayed from the bounds of slumber, and advise  
Upon life's little vain calamities,  
And in their sweet familiar voices talk  
Of death, that seemed so surely a strong balk,  
    As it were like the greeting of loved eyes.

## XVI

FROM . . . TO . . . —II

**A**ND far aloft upon those silent spaces  
I looked : and I was suddenly alone !  
I cried upon thy secret spirit flown,  
And heard thy voice receding fast, like traces  
Of blossoms overblown in windy places,  
Remote sad-yearning answers further thrown.  
Then knew I how this woe was of mine own  
Making, even sin that sunders and debases.

How long I wept I cannot tell at all,  
Till thou returnedst from thy banishment  
With such a sweet gracious admonishment  
And happiness too sweet—beyond recall.  
I cannot mind what thou didst say to me :  
Only I know that I have been with thee !

## XVII

### STRAYS

O DEATH, soft whisperer, well might you be  
A secret joy forbidden—sweetly told !  
Quiet as an intuition and as bold  
You come in wooing wise to welcome me  
And win my love so very tenderly  
—Whom oft I heard go hissing like a cold  
Serpent, and in my grip I longed to hold  
And strangle out its lengths tumultuously.

A serpent conquered Eve : a serpent still,  
With voice subdued to whispering sweetness, you  
Attempt my heart's weak vanity out of view  
Of my strong Adam, my imprudent will.  
—Nay, for she hears that hissing dry and chill,  
All your sweet subtle yearnful whispering through.

## XVIII

### MY MOTHER

HOW many little things, that while she lived  
Had hardly moved my mind at all, remain  
In clearest memory upon my brain ;  
And how much joy and sorrow have I derived  
From reading like a book her life again,  
At whose first reading I had missed so much  
—Or seemed to have missed till at death's final  
touch  
The book was closed, and the missed things were  
plain !

The joy she had in flowers, birds and books  
Brings my own joy therein like sorrow back ;  
This threadbare hassock, like a well-worn track,  
Leads back beyond my memory and sweet looks  
The first remembered ; and my heart hardly brooks  
Her spectacles and letters in the rack.

## XIX

*To Rupert Brooke*

### I. APOLLO THE GOD

A POLLO'S liege foresworn to ruddy Mars !  
And he who lately held thy fealty  
    And oath to keep thy heart and fingers free  
From all save beauty and the stops of song,  
And gave thee, his fair vassal, all the stars  
    And broad blue leagues of heaven for thy fief,  
And towery fame for builded castle strong,  
    Heard thee forswn with greater pride than grief.

And when before thy new untuneful lord  
    He saw thee singing, filled thy throat again  
With worthy song, till listening Mars grew vain  
And to himself thy music did accord  
—Ah ! then Apollo drew his jealous sword  
    And touched thy neck and took thy heart again.

## XX

### *To Rupert Brooke*

#### II. APOLLO THE SEER

SERVICE of heart and sinew unto death  
So bravely offered he would still allow  
And guard thee in the battle from the blow,  
Thy shield above, thy steadiness beneath.  
Nor should thy flesh the gaping wound-lips show,  
Nor thy keen spirit from its chafing sheath  
Hiss like a swift-drawn sword-blade, nor thy breath,  
Before thy song was finished, silent go.

He still could save thee.—Ah ! but he to save,  
Himself within death's very gate must smite  
And slay thee with a sudden shaft of light  
Which leaves no terror of the wound it gave ;  
But coming with the bosom of a wave  
Bore thee beyond the pebbled sands of night.

## XXI

### SUNSET

DAY, like a stricken soldier, crawls away  
Through blood and fire for cover in the west,  
And gentle evening finds him where he lay  
Outworn and fainting for a little rest  
That had been longer than he sadly guessed ;  
But soon she binds his wounds as best she may,  
And brings him leaning on her anxious breast  
To her cool ward far from the bickering fray.

Here he may rest and live. Sweet nurse serene,  
With cool deft slender hands, and feet like Hope's,  
And presence like a prayer or like a prayer's  
Answer unsought, and smile so calm and keen  
With sympathy that when pain blindly gropes  
At life he catches and not at close despairs.

## BOUSTROPHEDON

THE years like heavy oxen to and fro  
In slow monotony of ploughing go  
Across the pastures of my soul, where late  
Young Joy, the shepherd, led his delicate  
Choice flocks,—till older Care, grown jealous, set  
Time with his team to turn those meadows yet  
To more account. How soon the sharing plough  
Breaks up the turf and turns it through and through!  
How long ere those sad fields upturned in vain  
Shall show the level pasturage again !

## APRIL

COME, delicate with tears  
And soft with smiles,  
Sweet last of the fond year's  
Strong progeny, first daughter fair  
With gentle woman-wiles !

—Born close to March, thy brother of the gale  
—The ruddy boy !—and his playfellow white,  
Fair for a girl, yet, as a boy is brave,  
More open of thy joy, revealing now  
Love tender that he is too proud to show,  
Bright-eyed and he so grave.

Come, April, with thy broken skies  
Come on !  
We would be frolic who must be so wise  
Anon.  
We, too, would shed for joy a while our tears  
That flow for grief so long.

Come with thy buds and blossoms and delight ;  
Come with all love's arrears  
And might  
Of song !

Like last year's leaves  
Lie thoughts upon the brain  
—Break through, bright April, fresh and green  
again !  
March stirred them little with his mighty heaves  
Of wind ; but thou  
With little—with no pain—  
'Neath overgrowth of joy canst hide them now,  
Till sweet their netted wraiths alone remain.

Long hath my heart contained thee, and my mind  
Thy constant prophet been :  
No sweeter hope had my strong soul to bind  
Him earthward still.  
Come, April, on, fulfilled of life so green,  
With tracks of violet and daffodil !

## VIOLETS

I CAME through meadows where the cowslips  
grow

Below the tall moon-daisies broad and bright  
—Rich yellow cowslips, whose deep bosoms show  
Those crimson moles of beauty delicate.

The flowers as softly won upon my sight

As fragrance: sweet the blooms were to be  
seen,

Shapely to smell. So sight and smell relate  
Their mutual pleasure with no bar between.  
And in the hedgerow violets white or blue

Bloomed o'er the littered damp red-spotted sticks,  
And far across the field their fragrance threw;

—Then fast I closed my eyes at breath so rare,  
For sight and smell in one full sense to mix  
And draw such floating beauty from the air.

## THE RING-DOVE

DEEP in the thunder-tops of the dark pines  
Where, Jovely, March kept rumbling in  
restraint

His angry mischief, where with whispers faint  
And many a dazzling drop now April shines,  
The ring-dove proudly ripples his bright neck  
Beside his mate, who little seems to reck  
His wooing soft advances or fine show,  
But preens demure her feathers then and now  
Down her fair sides that softest shadows fleck ;—

Or flies beyond him to the farther tree,  
Whither in all his pride he labours fain,  
Then with soft indignation coos again  
And warm persuasions of his high degree,  
And love's fond praise proved in his choice desire,  
—Till he shall all her sweet reluctance tire,  
And she fresh won from happiest pretence  
Returns with him towards the pinetops dense,  
As humbly sweet as he could well require.

There soon on loudest wings and busiest  
They fly, and in their rosy beaks convey  
The little knotted broken sticks, and lay  
Together their strong flat loose-builded nest  
With genius' careless chance disposal fine,  
Surer than skill, than purpose more divine.  
And neater in its fond untidiness  
Their neatness' self.—And there thou soon shalt  
    press,  
Sweet dove, upon those two white eggs of thine !

## THE RED-BLACK ROSE

DEEP red-black rose,  
Dark angry rose divine,  
Proud passionate rose !  
Who, spending all his days,  
Could still achieve that praise  
And blame of thine ?

Deep red-black rose,  
Displeasured rose amain,  
Stern tyrannous rose !  
Who, wasting all his years,  
Thy proud self-constraint bears,  
And thy dark pain ?

Deep red-black rose,  
Indignant rose divine,  
Immoderate rose !  
Who, dreaming all his life,  
Could match that heart of strife  
—Dark love of thine ?

## CORYDON

L. O., KILLED IN ACTION SEPTEMBER 25, 1915

“ COME bring ye river weeds cold, lank and long,  
And with their clinging moisture bind my  
brows ;

Bring ye for wine sea-water salt and strong,  
That I alone with sorrow may carouse  
And, like a Bacchant in his wild delight,  
Make loud the hollow night  
With empty lamentation and fond strife,  
A single reveller, a sorry wight  
All drunken with the bitterness of grief !

“ Alas ! what company has bitter woe ?  
What willing followers such dread merriment ?  
On whom can grief her burden’s part bestow  
And find less anguish from the part she lent ?  
Or who can hope to share his heart’s distress  
Except with loneliness ?

So I must bear grief's burden all alone,  
Dire mistress she indeed to thwart or press,  
And lonely call upon thee, Corydon !

“ O Shepherd, wherefore—wherefore art thou fled ?  
Could we not give thy heart delight enough ?  
Wouldst walk a ghost amid the shades instead  
Of living wight with us, thy fellows rough ?  
Wast weary grown of gracing our poor love,  
Being so far above,  
We so unworshipful and unafraid ?  
We strove our silly uttermost to prove  
Our hearts of love which they so ill conveyed !

“ Nay now, forgive my false and foolish tongue  
Her broken river-babblings, thoughtless woe !  
Forgive a tender heart so sadly stung  
If for a lonely moment's ease she throw  
A little blame upon thy blameless head !  
—What chiding brook the dead ?  
O would that thou couldst even frown upon  
The hapless bitter words that I have said,  
And scorn our pastures, living, Corydon ! ”

So sang the mournful shepherd, chiding, calling  
“ O Corydon ! ” when twilight stroke the hills,

And stealthy shadows from the hills were crawling,  
And cool night-breezes shook the daffodils  
And through the bristly pine tree tops went sighing,  
As unto him replying.

Then back he brushed his curls and took his stock  
And strode the pasture that deft night was plying  
With weft of mist, to call his scattered flock.

Yet not alone, sad shepherd, thou didst weep  
For Corydon,—ah, hapless Corydon !  
Since all the shepherds of the dale did keep  
Their flocks apart and solitary moan ;  
And all made lamentation none could share  
Upon the noontide air ;  
And all held sorrow for their mistress true,  
None other's pleasure and none other's care ;  
And each lamented more than all could do.

Ah ! woeful shepherds well ye did lament  
Fair Corydon, and still have tears to shed.  
Life ne'er had such a loss along the dale,  
Nor so much love was in a moment fled,  
Nor so much loving left alone to brood  
Upon its solitude,  
Nor hope so much and such achievement rare

Did death before break up for fuel wood—  
Ah, shepherds, ye will have no tears to spare !

Well knew he how to send his happy breath  
On tuneful message through his oaten reed,  
Now to the shadowy court of jealous Death,  
And now to Love's warm bowers and bright mead,  
And often to those merry spaces by  
Of jocund Revelry,  
And sometimes on an errand soft and low  
With notes that crept, like tears upon the eye,  
To the sweet provinces of peerless Woe.

To tend his trusting flocks full well he knew,  
To wean from death the woolly-gaitered lamb  
That ails forgetful of the milk it drew  
So sweetly from its bleating anxious dam ;  
—Till it would stretch its little tongue and lick  
His fresh-dipped finger thick  
With cream,—now fondly kneeling on its knees  
From habit old, with drooping tail all quick  
From pleasure,—whom death only had seemed to  
please.

“ Oh ! who dares drive his sad unfollowing sheep  
And trust his tearful eyes to tale them truly,

The little lambs that will no longer leap,  
But wander from their bleating dams unruly ;  
The heavy ewes that roam and will not feed,  
As in some greater need,  
And with their sad inquiry fill the valley,  
Or restless rove in flocks across the mead,  
Or round the empty wattles seek and dally ?

“Let some new shepherd come who knew him not,  
Who will not mind the disregardful plaints  
Or know the meaning which their looks have got.  
Nay, none but I, albeit my heart faints,  
Shall take thy charge, to soothe much as I may  
Their bitter loss away,  
And bear to drive a while them all along,  
Till they with care shall follow in my way.”  
So broke the mournful shepherd on my song.

Full store had he of fables old and mellow  
To wile away a weary winter’s night  
Before the fragrant faggots flaming yellow  
And sending gusts of stars upon the night,  
And such a voice as carries level pleasure  
Within its happy measure,  
And to the oft-told story gives new grace,

And unto married hands a gentle pressure,  
And such sweet sadness to an old man's face.

Ah, Corydon ! And all the dale he filled  
In summer with the echoes of his song,  
Like the steep-ledgèd waterfall that spilled  
Its ropy lengths to music all along.  
And unto thee, fair Thestylis, he shook  
His music like a brook  
Of broken melodies all passing sweet  
—Ah, Thestylis, for tears thou canst not look,  
Nor he for love his melodies repeat !

“ Ne'er was so true a lover in the dell,  
So sweet a singer and historian,  
So shrewd and kind a shepherd, and so well  
Empowered a piper. O ye clouds that ran  
Swift races for him over April skies,  
Pause ye and sympathise ;  
Ye pastures that so well have known him send  
The dewy tears from all your flowery eyes ;  
And ye, sad mountains, your proud foreheads bend !

“ For Corydon is dead. Ah, woe the telling !  
Who gave a thought that he should ever die ?

Still shall I wander to his empty dwelling,  
Dreaming, then at the sudden thought rush by ;  
And still shall I start up from my vexation  
For his interpretation,  
Then weep my trouble new like dust away ;  
Still shall I come for his deep consolation,  
And still in vain for consolation stay.

“ Ah, Corydon ! as I was strong to love,  
So am I strong to lose so dear a friend.  
No foolish fancied joy of hope shall move  
My heart from forlorn sorrow’s certain trend ;  
Nor would I loose a single tear to gain  
What never can be plain  
As death is, never spare a tear to guess  
How I might see thy lovely head again,  
Save as I saw it in death’s loveliness.”

So sang the mournful shepherd as he came  
Beyond the pasture, weighed as though with years ;  
The stars seemed each a little curly flame  
As he looked out upon them through his tears.  
And night from all her generations shed  
Sad thoughts upon his head,  
And then by many a stair would lead him on

To hopes fallacious of the deathless dead.  
But still he followed not. " Ah, Corydon ! "

Now rose the gray and heavy-weeded morning,  
Forgetting all the colours he can show ;  
And late the flowers hung closed and disadorning  
The woods and meadows. Mists hung dewlap low,  
As earth and sky in one gray woe were meeting,  
And held the night's retreating,  
And veiled the sorrows of the silent rocks.  
Unslept and heedless of their timely bleating  
The shepherd still forgat his coted flocks.

## ARIEL

**P**IPE me to merry pastures, Spirit fair !  
Thou lovely shepherd, pipe to dance and  
song !

I would be dancer to your piping rare  
Who still have wept to mournful pipe so long :  
For I have left the dreary dales below  
To all their woe,  
And would with joyful heart and nimble feet  
Climb to thy mountain pastures fringed with snow,  
Where in good fellowship for pleasure sweet  
Now Spring and Winter meet,  
While bright clouds race and urging breezes blow.

Pipe thou my soul from her obscure recess  
At my heart's ingle, where she shruggeth still  
Over those ashes quite burned out—unless  
She still can dream of fire, being so chill—  
And bloweth fitfully on them for the flame  
That never came :

Or if she haply still a spark may find,  
—Pipe, though so haggard-old she seem and lame;  
Pipe age and care and coldness out of mind ;  
Pipe in new fires behind,  
—No smouldering fires to her returning shame !

Pipe her to youth, till she shall braid her hair  
And put on dazzling robes of new delight,  
And mid the lovely damsels dance more fair,  
And mid the dancing breezes speed more light,  
And mid the fragrant flowers more fragrant move,  
Sweeter than love,  
—Till she no more her ingle-nook shall seek,  
Or of cold loneliness again approve,  
Crouching upon herself grown old and weak ;  
But shall fold winter bleak  
With warmth below and tenderness above.

Scatter the ashes from the vacant hearth ;  
Blow the great flakes like merry leaves along ;  
And cleanse and garnish all the chambers swarth :  
Pipe *home to hearth* and to a marriage song !  
For she with Joy, her bridegroom, now returns  
Where new fire burns,—  
New fire with heaped up fuel and mighty store,

New fire that dies not though she ne'er concerns  
Herself to plenish it, that evermore  
Burns brightly as before,  
Consuming not, nor to sad ashes turns.

Pipe, lovely shepherd, never cease thy lays,  
The while I tend thy flocks with joyous cheer !  
Pipe out the equal lengths of unlost days ;  
Pipe out the volume of the rolling year ;  
With joy pipe in each happy change anew,  
Each season true  
With sweetness old returning ! Pipe me fain  
Awake when first gay dawn comes peering through ;  
Pipe me to slumber soft when heaven's plain  
Grows starry-deep again ;  
And all sweet dreams advance with music true !

## THE SEASONS

(DEADMAN'S SONG FROM "LIFE")

**H**OW long have I been lacking  
Those gray fields fresh and free,  
Those cloudy hills and valleys,  
And the gray brimming sea ?  
—How long I lack those Winters  
That never quite can lay  
The sweet ghosts of dead Summers  
And Autumns dropped away :  
—Those unregretful Winters  
Of sweet serene old age,  
That pausing in his reading  
Turns back the mellow page.

How long have I been lacking  
—Those dreaming spreads of sky,  
Those woodlands low and rosy,  
Those woodlands green and high ?

—How long I lack those Autumns  
That never quite forget  
Amid their happy fruitage  
That Summer did beget :  
—Those grateful golden Autumns  
Of gentle age mature,  
That in her children's faces  
Sees her dead lord endure.

How long have I been lacking  
Those lofty noons aglow,  
Those tall undazzled mountains,  
Those dazzled seas below ?  
—How long I lack those Summers  
That never quite repent  
In all their sober wisdom  
Of Spring's wild ravishment :  
Those burning sanguine Summers  
Of manhood first put on,  
That strains for ever forward,  
Forgetting what has gone.

How long have I been lacking  
Those buds and blossoms bright,  
The day all tears and music,  
The tender starry night ?

—How long I lack those Aprils  
That never quite surprise  
The wonder of dead Winter  
From their immortal eyes :  
—Those tearful, blissful Aprils  
Of childhood, age's friend,  
The fond impatient reader  
Who turns to con the end.

## DELIGHT IN CHILDREN

**B**Y merry feet my grapes are trodden down,  
The flickering unshod feet of young delight ;  
My days aside upon an heap are thrown  
Like empty shrunken skins, and all their juice  
Is drawn to make bright merriment more bright  
Or stored to be a bitter time's excuse.

Unstubborn, trampled days—that feet so light  
Should make such darling havoc and should wring  
So much of ecstasy from things so slight !  
Yet were my days as mountains, they were less  
Mighty than grapes which children as they sing  
So lightly dance on in love's merry press.

EPISTLE TO —

FAREWELL!—TO DAMON GREETINGS AND FAREWELL!

**W**HEN Autumn nights grow cold and fires begin,  
And resting Time has put his slippers on,  
And warms his feet before the blazing hearth  
Lying at happy length, grown sociable;  
And dreaming smiles into the glowing fire,  
—I draw the other chair and opposite  
Bask too, and in an equal share of dream  
Engrossed, communication sweet enjoy  
Of silence, the soul-speech of constant friends;  
—Or, when they bring the candles, take my book  
Well thumbed, with turned-down pages, opening  
Without my conscious will, like a friend's heart,  
Directly at the best belovèd place—  
That chosen poem often read before,  
Yet full of new discoveries. Or I take  
My tablets and write down my ease of heart,  
Then, reading through the record, wonder who

Bent o'er my shoulder and usurped my hand  
And wrote those fancies, which I cannot claim,  
But startled read as something sweet and strange,  
And almost disavow the handwriting  
As mine ! But who could counterfeit so well ?  
Or haply missing a friend's feet that met  
So often mine upon the blazing hearth,  
A letter write, like my unanswered half  
Of conversation, and almost as sweet ;  
And in the pleasant hope of pleasing him  
And fond imagination of him there  
With patient smile and ready waiting tongue,  
Forget the lack of his remarks between,  
—Rather like one who hardly can allow  
His friend speech-room of heart, so copiously  
He must disburden his. And even so  
And with such cheer I now to you indite  
This letter, by the steady candles' flame,  
You opposite, Time having left his chair,  
And you usurped it. But I dare not look,  
Since only by the waving of my pen,  
His magic characters, his wizard words,  
And swift unpausing sentences, can I  
Contain you in the corner of my eye,  
Hardly observed, but smiling there as though  
You had my thought already and I yours.

“ Farewell ! ” that strikes so often a sad end,  
Strikes here a sweet beginning, as it should,  
The goodwill featly rolling distance up—  
That well-writ scroll of ours—and sealing it  
With closeness more than hand or tongue or eye  
Could offer, the unbroken closeness of the heart.  
And so that scroll shall lie for ever sealed  
Among Love’s documents, like some one’s bond,  
With its *Whereas* and *Items* and *Aforesaid*s,  
In legal rote sonorous and unread.  
For in that contiguity of heart,  
An involution sweet of thoughts ensphered  
With well-wishing concentric, like those orbs  
Of ivory so delicately intercarved  
Throughout the whole inlay of lesser globes,  
The skill of some quaint slant-eyed Chinaman  
—That mutual interwreathing sweet of soul,  
We make the bond superfluous evermore.

“ Farewell ! ”—Love’s first fond wish and Love’s  
sad last—

But though well-wishing is a closer thing  
Than flesh is, yet as signet on that seal,  
And clear peculiar mark and monogram,  
Royal cipher, I would have thyself impressed  
In bodily presence, for my Self to feel

The firm raised lettering with embodied touch,  
As something to be lost and sadly sweet,  
But only to be lost until the losing  
Is also lost in everlasting gain.

Now, Friend, I pause to mend the fallen fire  
That needeth mending, pile the pine logs on  
And watch the hissing resin flow and flame,  
And smell therein the sweetness of my thoughts.  
How secretly Time crept back to his chair !

Fire glows anew, and all my thought moves on,  
And now I will discourse of other things,  
If not so near the heart yet nearly touching  
Our lives, and very delicate indeed.

To you, my Friend, who like a gardener fed  
My first unfolding leaves of poesy,  
Disclosing promises of bloom between,  
And, most sagacious, gently pruned away  
Rash overgrowths too prodigal of sap,  
And wisely bound against the sunniest wall  
The chosen branches: to you who digged once  
more  
About the roots and brought the barren boughs  
To blossom, and the blossom to sweet fruit,

To your choice tasting sweet, your taste approved  
By less intrepid tasters who still fear  
To acclaim new fruit among more splendid old,  
And shyly hold their judgment,—the more praise  
To you, to me more gratitude!—the tree  
Puts forth her best for you alone, until  
Others shall dare at your temptation take  
The *good and evil* as they deem, and find  
That they have fed upon a *tree of life*.  
And not so much in fond maternal mood  
Of authorship as filially relying  
On your paternal judgment shrewd and true,  
Prouder parental love too proud to praise  
Save what praiseworthy is, I surely make  
So bold a claim, inarrogant, as you,  
And I care not who else, will grant.—Although  
I feel it flow as virtue in my heart  
That something of these rimes that I have made  
Shall still be music on the Last of Days.

Yet is my soul at question with my heart,  
And my mind stands perplexed as arbiter  
Whether by using this one talent, lodged  
With me for use I doubt not (wherefore else  
Save as temptation, and this I cannot hold)  
As profitably as I may, I serve

My proper end and best accounted purpose ;  
Or rather do not hide beneath it still  
Talents more profitably used, and judge  
It, being most delightful, also best.  
And the strict suit is all the more perplexed  
Because my soul, the prosecutor, still  
Half hopes for the defendant, and the judge  
Is also in heart's favour prejudiced ;  
And only Conscience, my soul's counsel cold,  
By his close reasoning and argument  
Irrefutably holds the balance still  
A little less than level on his side.  
And all save he are tempted to invite  
And final make your sought decision, since  
Too well they know how you would straight decide  
With heavy acceptable damages  
Against the suit, and with such strict account  
That Conscience would fall baffled back, and hold  
The plaintiff as non-suited after all.

This way persuasion lies. But I who late  
Half-hearted, for no better purpose, would  
Abandon Poesy, so little I  
Achieved, and only at your strong rebuke withheld  
—Full-hearted now and flushed with something done  
Am stronger to abandon, have attained

Courage to conquer proud success, although  
He stronger seems than failure ever was,  
If this to better purpose may be done.  
Wherefore, I now adjure you, take the scales,  
As much as mine the world's friend, and forgetting  
Your pleasure and therein my dear delight,  
—Forgetting, only that more pleasure still  
May yet be won and more delight attained  
For us by sacrifice which then shall seem  
So little, nay, become so great a joy—  
And give your judgment like a God, who looks  
Upon the individual through mankind,  
And loves him more as he becomes himself  
The more he is inseparably lost  
Among his fellows, impersonally achieves  
The truest personality of all.

Yet can a man judge only for himself ;  
But having so essentially a friend's heart,  
Can judge with it alone. And so, my friend,  
My heart, my self, judge with me for the best.

And now the fire is all burnt out and gray,  
The candles to their sockets sunk, and Time  
Makes stir for bed, and I must bid " Good-night ! "

## TITHONUS

**B**URDENED with immortality and bending,  
Whom years could break not with their mortal  
weight,  
A crooked Tithon sorrowfully wending,  
A hoopéd mockery of godlike height,

My soul went heavy, as a swan slow-winging  
Her death-way down the failing flanks of sky  
With tardy mortal song,—my soul went singing  
Song woeful with its immortality.

## THE BREEZE AND THE FEATHER

**T**HE sobbing breeze has rocked himself to sleep  
And in his slumber still must weep

That waking did such lamentation keep.

Over the glade the woods of pine  
Heavily their dark arms entwine,  
Bowed with a heavy care divine,  
Heavily lay their heads together,  
Heavily and without a sound  
—Save the voice of the little feather  
Softly floating down and around.

Lightly the little feather falls,  
Lightly eddies and lightly calls,  
Lightly with visible madrigals,  
For her dear playfellow sad so long  
With life too heavy, and love too strong,  
And sleep too feeble to save the wrong ;  
And the angel pines too thronged together,  
Thronged together without a sound.  
Soft is the silver fall of the feather  
Slowly floating down and around.

" Or ever I come to the sad earth's breast,  
Gentle breeze, leap up from thy rest,  
Swift as thy wont was loveliest !

Speed me and chase me, filling all  
My heart with thy joy ethereal ;  
—Rend me, but do not let me fall  
Here, where the pines so brood together,  
Brood together without a sound ! ”  
Sweet was the voice of the fearful feather  
Slowly floating down and around.

Wider and wider still her rings she spun,  
Glad in the sudden struggling sun,  
Eddying lest all too soon her fall were done.

Lightly she heard the sad breeze stir ;  
Lightly she dived to meet him there ;  
Heavily earth came up to her.

Heavily wept the pines together,  
To and fro with a sighing sound :  
Silent fluttered the fallen feather  
Wet and heavy upon the ground.

Silver feather—O hapless feather !  
Bright arms brush back the clouded skies,  
And the brooding pines all shine together  
Watching the wakened breeze arise.

THE BREEZE AND THE FEATHER 209

Glad he rises and lightly blows  
To stir the feather's heavy repose  
To the light soft-floating life he knows.

Heavily in his arms she lies ;  
Heavily with her corpse he flies,  
Chiding ever as he does go  
Upon his pitiless playfellow.

## VIGNETTE BETWEEN TWO FINGERS

**P**INCCHED waters creeping pass  
Through the long grass,  
Bright mouse-quick rills  
That run  
Down to the dun  
And rapid staglike river tined with reeds,  
Which runs between the hills  
And through the flaggy meads.

## APOCALYPSE

FRESH fragrant rose, ah ! broken bud unwise,  
I hear the sighs of Autumn's Ladies fair  
Jealous of thee, as in their cruel despair  
They strip thy leaves—even now upon my eyes,  
Before the summer dies !

Fresh rose, fresh rose,  
Again thy petals close,  
Sad bosom of my bliss,  
Sweet bosom of my woes,  
—Sweet fresh red rose !

Fresh fragrant rose, before the summer dies,  
I hear the tramp of Autumn's Gentlemen  
In their gay tabards, treading down again  
Thy fatal beauty—that all scattered lies  
Already on my eyes !

Fresh rose, fresh rose,  
Again thy petals close,  
Sad bosom of my bliss,  
Sweet bosom of my woes,  
—Sweet fresh red rose !

## THE TOURNEY'S END

THAT arrogant cold knight, with naked shield  
    Unblazoned, bannerless and closely mailed,  
Has triumphed in the bitter graceless field,  
    And in the mire moiled Autumn's colours trailed.  
—Thou silent secret knight without a name,  
What sorry trumpets thee unvanquished proclaim !  
    Sad queen of beauty, rise  
        Since this must be.  
    Yield him the grudging prize  
        Of victory  
    With unsurrendering eyes.

What ! kneels he not to take the proffered crown ?  
    Will no one dare to smite behind his knees,  
Or strike him, or himself be stricken down ;  
    Victorious in that he no longer sees  
The dread insufferance and the dreader shame ?  
Dares no man strike his vizor up and learn his name ?

Sad queen of beauty, rise  
Since this must be.  
Yield him the grudging prize  
Of victory  
With unsurrendering eyes.

Come then in armèd bands and close him round ;  
Less shame it were to save the Lady so.  
Alas ! what armèd bands could e'er withstand  
That heart or stand against his mighty blow !  
Smile, ladies, lest he wreak you further shame ;  
Victorious, ye craven trumpets, him proclaim.

Sad queen of beauty, rise  
Since this must be.  
Yield him the grudging prize  
Of victory  
—And with surrendering eyes.

## EPITAPH

SLOWLY down in a long descent  
Under the glittering firmament,  
To and fro in a gentle fall,  
Lengthening out lorn life afar,  
Wound my heart from his glory tall,  
'Twixt dim Earth and his lost bright Star  
—Sank to the Earth and found her breast  
Sweeter than his fair star's unrest.

## FORTUNE'S WHEEL

THE Wheel is turning, very softly turning :  
Invisibly at utmost speed it goes ;  
And these are careless maybe, and those yearning,  
And these are lost in what men call repose.

The Wheel is turning : may it bring  
Thee fortune fair and fit !  
The Wheel is a mighty, splendid thing  
—And underneath is the Pit !

The Wheel is turning, very softly turning,  
Like music into sudden silence hushed ;  
And those above are pitiless and burning,  
And those below are pitiful and crushed.

The Wheel is turning, very softly turning  
As exquisitely as most subtle pain ;  
And some are crushed away by that slow churning,  
And some are crushed, but clinging rise again.

The Wheel is turning, very softly turning  
Relentless as the silent firmament ;  
And those who reach the crest of all their yearning  
Already move upon the dire descent.

The Wheel is churning, very slowly churning ;  
And how soft the circle comes again,  
Fortune accepts the stubborn souls returning  
With all the pity and the strength of pain.

The Wheel is turning : may it bring  
Thee fortune fair and fit !  
The Wheel is a mighty, splendid thing  
—And underneath is the Pit !

## OLDMAN'S SONG

(FROM "LIFE")

**A**ND we have borne the brunt of the weathers  
Over, my heart, and over again,  
The rage of the sun and the snow's slow feathers,  
The drought of frost and the pelt of rain.

And none shall say, as he stoops and shivers  
And pokes the log to a brighter blaze,  
That we were one of the ingle-livers  
Who clip their lives to lengthen their days.

## THE ANCIENT HARPER OF ABINGDON

THE Autumn leaves were aflicker, faltering  
through the mist,  
Falling, steadily falling, like sick flames faltered  
they—  
I' the saddest of all sad sheddings, for the sulky  
winds were whist  
And came not grasping to whirl them and drift  
them dancing away.

So they hung to the point of dropping, like a drowning man to a spar.  
Not even the boughs took pity, nor shook of their own accord.  
And the mist hung heavy upon them, and wetted the grass afar ;  
And they fell in a sadder silence than the sigh of the saddest word.

THE ANCIENT HARPER OF ABINGDON 219

Thickly the mist hung wreathèd, a gather of unblown  
breath ;  
As the world might cease in winter and all breath  
stagnant be,  
And if it lessened the falling and hid the chasm  
beneath,  
It maddened with motionless patience and stolid  
insistency.

And weary was I, and weary of Autumn, the fruit  
and the falling ;  
And I gathered my harp and I covered his cords  
from the misty dew.  
Then I harkened again to the silence, and I heard the  
silence calling ;  
And I looked at the mist again, and the Shape came  
darkening through.

I snatched my harp from his cover, the Lay from his  
gleaming strings ;  
And I sate on the ivy-tussock under the flaking gold ;  
And I took my harp to my knee, and I sang as a  
mother sings—  
Till the leaves flew back from their falling, and the  
silver mist was rolled.

And first I sang for the music ; but the music  
stronger grew  
And softly gathered my song as the sun might gather  
a cloud.  
And the breath of a thousand Aprils over my spirit  
blew ;  
And green were the leaves of the forest, and the  
songs of the forest were loud.

Bowed and bearded and hoary, a man of winter and  
warp  
Had I sat on the ivy-tussock, haggard, weary, and  
old ;  
Till the music had lifted me up, and I sang like a  
child to my harp,  
And green were the leaves of the forest, and the  
flowers of the forest were gold.

Then I felt my beard fall from me, my tunic leap to  
my knees ;  
And I felt thick curls on my forehead, and my face  
as smooth as a flower ;  
And I looked at my hands and laughed, and lifted  
my harp with ease ;  
And I looked at my knee so slender, and rose with  
timorous power.

THE ANCIENT HARPER OF ABINGDON 221

And I danced to an antique music, and sang a forgotten song,

Under the leaves of the forest, over the flowers and grass.

Then I sate on the ivy-tussock, and I drew my harp along ;

And sudden, under my fingers, I felt a new strength pass.

But sad was the sound of the music—as a desolate sea that swept

Over a desolate shore, and my heart was the streaming sand.

And I bent with my falling tresses, and over my harp I wept ;

And the music mourned and murmured after I held my hand.

For I thought of my wife unhappy over the ingle fire,  
Lorn for her aged harper, and shedding her tears in vain.

And a little thing seemed the glory, fond of my heart's desire,

And much and good seemed the guerdon of silver age again.

222 THE ANCIENT HARPER OF ABINGDON

And I felt a beard at my chin, and the sickle-bend  
in my back ;  
I looked at my quivering hand there—'twas crooky,  
rugged, and old ;  
And I found that my harp was heavy, and stiff were  
my knees, alack !  
And dead were the flowers of the forest, and the  
leaves of the forest were gold.

And the mist grew heavy upon them, and wetted the  
grass below,  
And leaves were loosing and falling, falling like  
sickly fire ;  
But I wist not of their falling as I crept to the ingle  
glow,  
And much and good was my guerdon, and little my  
heart's desire.

ENVOY

My harp has a silken cover, and hay in his gleaming  
cords ;  
I sit on the ivy-tussock, sit in the sun alone.  
The song has a lovely cadence and tender beautiful  
words ;  
But my tongue is under a ban, and my heart is under  
a stone.

## WEEPING-WILLOWS

THE weeping-willows linèd here,  
Green-plunging with cascade of leaves,  
Sweep over like a booming weir  
Which to a deaf man doth appear,  
An apparition that deceives  
His sense, and more appears outright  
Like sound upon his dazzled sight,  
—A sounding sight, a visible sound,  
A stable motion, stillness racing,  
Sheer-falling through the frothless ground  
Where-under the weird stream is wound  
Beyond all hope of human tracing.

## THE MAD HARPER OF HOLYCLEUGH

(HE SINGS TO HIS HARP)

**T**HE heavens were weighed upon the world with  
mist,

And all so narrow is and all so gray,  
And oh ! I strike thy shivering cords to whist  
The sad slow things that eat my heart away.

And there is music in the air,  
A sighing and a sobbing and a keening ;  
—Music that makes lost lovely things more fair  
And stirs the slow things with its intervening,  
Whilst I for joy despair.

Cold slow things that eat my heart  
And know no stay and know no hush !  
—For my soul is a bird that lurks apart,  
A songless thrush  
In a myrtle bush,

## THE MAD HARPER OF HOLYCLEUGH 225

A sightless hawk in a maple tree,  
Hid from my riddled heart and me !  
And the music stirs but will not speed.

—Oh for a soul that sings !  
—Oh for a soul that preys indeed !  
—The cold slow eating things.

The heavens are lifted up, the broad world glows,  
And deep is starry night and purple day,  
And ah ! I touch thy quivering cords to rouse  
The sweet sad things to eat my heart away.

And there is music in the air,  
A laughing and a singing and no sighing :  
Music that makes all unsad things more fair  
And whists the slow things with its joy undying,  
Whilst I for joy despair.

Sweet sad things that eat my heart,  
And know no times, no seasons mark !  
—For my soul is a bird that flies apart,  
A songful lark  
In the purple dark,  
A keen-eyed hawk in the welkin free,  
Clear to my riddled heart and me !

226 THE MAD HARPER OF HOLYCLEUGH

And the music lulls, and will not stir.

—Oh, that my soul so sings !

—Oh, that my soul so poises her !

—The sweet sad eating things.

(*He lifts his head and sings.*)

When I am glad, my harp is sad

    And dashes all my song ;

When I am sad, my harp is glad

    And adds to the dull wrong.

Or it may be when I am glad,

    My harp is merry too ;

Then lack I something sweet and sad,

    Or joy is worse than woe.

Or may it be when I am sad,

    My harp, too, mournful is ;

Then need I something bright and glad,

    Or woe is less than bliss.

For bliss may be the increase of bliss,

    And sorrow balm of sorrow ;

But all the world is all amiss

    With me. And so, good-morrow !

## CONFESSİONAL

(A FRAGMENT FROM "LIFE")

I HAVE brought life in ruin on my head,  
—A mighty Samson in my last despair,  
—And mangled lie among the mangled dead,  
    Who better had been first to perish there.  
Behold the ruin I have made so surely  
Of that proud pleasure-house built so securely,  
Which I as easily at last have shed  
    As Autumn sheds her glories on the air !  
  
—More easily than one who shakes a tree  
    And brings quick apples all about his head ;  
—Ah me, that some bright fruitage ripe and free  
    Had fallen to my shaking now, instead  
Of this vast ruin with its heavy glories,  
Delicate chambers and voluptuous stories,  
And lustrous outward shows of purity,  
    And all its histories and secrets dread !

## FRAGMENT TO BEAUTY

**T**HOU oldest and thou newest thing of all ;  
Most durable, most transient ; most dear  
To youth and unto age most tragical ;

Beauty, upon the opening of the year  
Most meet it is that I to thee should sing  
Among the myriad voices of the Spring,

While love is waking that so soon shall cease,  
And lovely flowers forget life's niggard lease,  
And green leaves dream not of their withering.

The love, the flowers, the leaves shall fade and die,  
And thou remain for other Springs to show  
That wist not of as lovely Springs gone by,

Nor of as lovely Springs that time shall strow ;  
Nor wonder at those withered things that fly  
Restless upon the lightest winds, or lie

In mats upon their feet, nor ever guess  
That they once filled the air with loveliness,  
Or dallied in soft amour with the sky.

Ah, Beauty, how so young and fresh thou art !  
I ever trace in that calm look of thine  
A gentle sad antiquity of heart  
Which makes thee lovelier and more divine,  
As thou wert weary grown of being fair,  
And death were something which thou canst not  
share,  
And something life, which no fond hope relieves,  
Like all the fallings of the Autumn leaves,  
And youth and Spring the new-birth of Despair.

So, mournful Beauty, do I turn from thee,  
Embodyed in the transiency of Spring,  
To thee more spirit-certain if less free  
In those eternal songs that poets sing,  
—The songs of joy, processional and fleet ;  
The songs of passion and of praise ; the meet  
Devotion-songs of strength and faith made fast ;  
And those the wildest songs of all, at last,  
Too far from joy to be aught else but sweet.

## TURNED WOMAN

BRIGHT are the woods and the blossomy spaces,  
and bright are the brave clouds flying ;  
Fresh and clear are the singing birds, and mur-  
murous moves the sea.  
April hath marked her swelling breast, and her long  
dark hair she is plying ;  
Chooseth a longer kirtle now to cover her gleaming  
knee.

She, young Dian, no more shall harry the deer in the  
shady forest,  
Chaste and bare as the morning wind, with long hair  
flying free.  
Now no more shall her cold boy lover—thou man  
who more than adorest !  
—Brook unawed the covered grace that he once  
blushed not to see.

Deep and dark are the fragrant woods, and warm  
is the fain air closing ;

Soft are the sweetest singing birds, and the mur-  
murous sea replies.

Something nearer than joy can be, as sadness near,  
is reposing

Now in the deep soft sweetness dark of passionate  
April's eyes.

She at last, so long undesiring, knoweth not what  
she desireth,

Feeling her bright heart languish alone, her spirit  
searching go ;

Soon at a word she leapeth affrighted, soon at a  
touch she fireth

Back from her absent kindling thought to her  
present body aglow.

She no longer aloof shall dare with raillery of bright  
glances

Challenge his growing fervour and mock his solemn  
serious pain.

He no more at her altered mood shall dare his  
aweless advances.

Ne'er shall he be the cold boy-lover nor she rash  
Dian again.

## LOVER'S SONG

(FROM "LIFE")

**N**O single sorrow shall e'er befall us,  
No silver thread be found in thy hair ;  
Love shall rock us to sleep and call us,  
And keep night quiet and daytime fair ;  
And the future shall cover what might appal us,  
And the burying past rot all our care.

Be youth and passion with us for ever,  
The beauty of lips ne'er fade away ;  
What youth has joined let not age dissever,  
Nor Time's destroyer know Time's decay.  
Let the future cover what shall be never,  
And the past ne'er gather what still shall stay.

May life be ever the darling present ;  
—What can the past and the future hold ?  
The full moon only can wane decrescent,

The full year only scatter her gold.  
But this shall never be evanescent  
If love be loyal and beauty bold.

And this I said when life was before us :  
—We have had sorrows ; your hair is gray ;  
Only death could have folded o'er us  
All that I grudged him so that day.  
Has age than youth less love to empower us ?  
Has love not grown with our fading ? Say !

“ SUNSET AND EVENING STAR, AND AFTER  
THAT THE DARK ”

UPON this mild March evening little birds  
Flock to the budded tall tree tops and sing  
Soft Jubilate to the sense of Spring ;  
—Music too sweet and swift to wait on words,  
But strong to move the heart to deep accords  
Of silent melody, and sure to wring  
Thought from the use of lips by offering  
A clearer meaning than all speech affords.

Now dies that gentle evensong again ;  
The sun upon the west has tilted up  
His golden ducts of light, as if to drain  
The daytime back into his sunken cup ;  
And from her eastern barbican unshown  
Night slowly lets her mighty drawbridge down.

## INTERLUDE

NOW night had threshed out all her golden grain,  
And wondering at the harvest silent stood ;  
There shone her thin bright sickle hung again  
Below the webbed eaves, and close were lain  
Her windy flails. Along the darkling wood  
In downy flight a white owl fluttered plain  
And ghostly ; and I too went in solemn mood  
—A thing of spirit more than flesh and blood.

I seemed not walking on the ground at all,  
Night seemed a more material thing than I,  
The owl a being gross substantial,  
And such an earthly thing it seemed to fly,  
And such imprisonment to live withal,  
And such a thing impossible to die.

## MIRIAM

WHEN as I look upon your beauty fair,  
So young and fresh a thing, so surely new,  
So sweet a novelty of youth, and you  
So separate from all charms that ever were  
Before, or shall be evermore, I seem  
To look on something very sweet and old,  
And known before the last Creation rolled  
Into Reality—which is God's dream.

For beauty is the oldest thing of all.  
—And yet her closest bosom-friend is Youth ;  
And is of all things most ephemeral ;  
—And yet her consort is eternal truth.  
Wherefore my eyes upon your beauty gaze  
With a strange mingled sense of awe and ruth.

## THE THUMPING

I HEARD a rabbit thumping under ground,  
To warn his fury folk that I was near.  
And first I laughed to hear the warning sound  
Far-carrying, I suppose, but hardly clear.  
Then was I seized with a more dreadful fear  
Than held the cowering rabbits all around,  
To think that at my coming should appear  
Distrust so usual and fear so profound :  
—To think their fear so necessary is  
And they so blameless, and to think that I,  
Who blameful listened to the shaken sod,  
Shall, by my own clear faults condemned, I wis,  
Upon that day when Judgment fills the sky,  
So thump and cower from the fear of God.

## DOGGED

(HEREDITY'S SONG FROM "LIFE")

**D**RIPPING, dripping, and dripping,  
As fell as the silence of dearth,  
Was ever a sound so single,  
Ever so lone a sound,  
So full of the rot of the heavens,  
So full of the rotting earth,  
So pitiless and so steady,  
So wicked and so profound ?

I went up the dripping forest,  
And turned again and again ;  
For ever I heard, as I journeyed,  
A breathing terrible thing  
Come in the wake of my walking,  
Dogging the fear in my brain,  
So steadily, steadily creeping,  
And stealthily following.

—Stepping between my footsteps,  
Breathing between my breath,  
Beating between my heart-beats,  
Thinking between my thoughts,  
—Oh, deadly beyond all deadness,  
A damning triumph of death,  
A being sicker and surer  
For seeming a thing of nought.

I felt it closer and threat'ning  
If joy arose in my heart,  
And I felt it close and forbidding  
If I opened my lips to sing ;  
But and if I loved for a moment  
It withered my soul apart  
With a sense of terrible pleasure,  
Like a wicked beautiful thing.  
  
And it would not let me forget it,  
And it never would let me see,  
Though I turned again in my travel,  
Oft again and around  
In a dread and little desiring  
To see what a thing would be  
So pitiless and so steady,  
So wicked and so profound.

Dripping, dripping, and dripping  
Down from the drenchy trees,  
Was ever a sound so deadly,  
Ever a sound so fell ?  
Would life had a little respite,  
And love had a moment's ease,  
Or death were a thing less dreadful  
With the Worm and Fire of Hell.

## HEREDITY

(FROM "LIFE")

**A** LAS ! What leaguer of the Past is this  
That hems my soul in, such a force of days  
In companies of months, such deep arrays  
Of year-battalions, such brigades I wis  
Of centuries amiss,  
And æons in such divisions dark always  
—The full embattled Past ! And swelling his  
Resistless forces yet in strong relays  
And column of long route fresh days come on,  
Falling behind his banners, armed and bent  
By my rebellious passions all anon  
To keep my soul from his enfranchisement.

What battle should a single soul contain  
Against such everlasting odds as these ?  
—How dare to take a fitful moment's ease,  
Lest his past watches all be rendered vain

And the foe pierce again  
His oft-repaired defence?—How hope to seize  
Victory from such gathered powers amain?  
Yet hath the leaguer still some stress to please,  
Much pride my soul in being worthy held  
Of such a numerous and shrew attack  
—Such strength in pride that far from being quelled  
He sallies forth and wrests the leaguer back!

And if despair, that treachery within,  
Or sooth Temptation treacherous without  
—That smooth ambassador of terms—lure doubt  
To yield up more than arms could ever win,  
And his tired troops begin  
To talk surrender and lay their arms about,  
Forgetting all the perfidy of sin,  
—Then stirs my soul from his lulled sense of rout  
And weariness and promise fickle-sweet,  
Remembering past surrenders foul-betrayed,  
And victory scarce saved from false defeat,  
When he had been disarmed and disarrayed.

O Liberty! As glorious 'tis to die,  
As sweet to live, for thee, as dire to live  
And lose the while we still have lives to give  
And thou canst yet be saved. Strong captaincy

My soul resumes thereby :  
—Bids back the false ambassador, alive  
If he would still to his false masters fly ;  
Takes all his battle, and alone will strive  
Against the angry onset of his foes ;  
Till his tired troops, for very pride and shame,  
Follow, as he from strength to conquest goes  
And all the æons to himself makes tame.

## TIME-SERVERS

**T**HE studded night now stood ajar  
And pale the morning showed between ;  
Sweet sang the silver horns afar,  
Sweet sank their sounds serene.

Awake ! between the night and day  
Time passes with his bright array  
And banners, with tall gonfalons  
His mighty warriors shelled in mail,  
And in apparel gay their sons,  
—Wearily and with faces pale  
—And maidens very fair to see  
But very sad to look upon,  
And aged dames—how sour they be !  
And gracious dames so sweet and wan.

Swing to the studded door again  
And let them pass before I see !  
Sad sang the silver trumpets plain,  
Sad sank the melody.

Who shall swing to the studded night  
On the dark hinges grinding slow ?  
—Or stay the silver trumpet's might ?  
—Or bind your eyes enow ?

Then fling the studded door, fling wide !  
Let in the healthy day before  
Love has one recreant more to chide,  
Time's train one follower more !

Who shall swing wide the studded door ?  
—Or haste the hinges grinding gray ?  
Sweet sang the silver horns once more,  
Sad sank the sounds away !

## ADIEU TO THE MUSE

### YESTERDAY

**K**IND Goddess, from whose worshipping I come  
With all the sweet delight which love should  
claim,

Though from thy marble lips no murmur came  
Because perhaps I was too venturesome,  
Forgetting awe too much, too little love !  
O thou to whom I knelt, whose heart I prove,  
At whose thick teeming altar I have led  
So many hopes, so many tears have shed,  
And prayers so many, heedless thou above !

If once so joyfully I knelt and rose,  
Regarding not thy silence most austere,  
Without the usual tribute of a tear,  
Or sad abasement of imploring brows,  
Forgive my latest and my lonely wrong !

For I in fear who worshipped thee so long  
Came suddenly with joy; since ere I prayed  
My prayer was answered. Still I worship made  
Before I sang thy overmastering song.

## TO-DAY

But now I come in bitter tears again,  
With no reproaches and no sacrifice,  
Save what upon my broken spirit lies  
Like tender victim pitifully slain  
Upon the broken faggots ere the blue  
Oil-fostered fragrant flame has fluttered through  
—Nay weighs upon the altar, kills the fire!  
—Even my love, my unconsumed desire,  
My pleasure sweet! I come to bid adieu.

Sad victim! whom I often slew before  
And left upon my soul, life's altar, dead,  
But, ere the fire was fully kindled, fled,  
And saw him come so bloodily once more,  
Fawning anon, despite the wild blind blow  
That I had dealt for death before and now,  
With wonder and such unreproachful trust  
In his mild eyes, with such a tender thrust  
Of his cold muzzle in my hand. O thou!

Ah me! Ah me! but I have struck him down,  
And there he lies in such a woeful heap!  
I watched the happy flames about him creep,  
Then die, so little seemed they to condone!  
O kindly Goddess, I beseech thee yet,  
Although the dismal sacrifice was set  
Against thy worship, from thine altar lend  
Strong unconsuming fire to make an end,  
That he may be destroyed and I forget!

Thou wilt not? Ah! must he for ever lie  
Upon my heavy spirit, cold and dead?  
Is this life's dire acceptance sole instead  
Of withering fire? Is this thy penalty?  
Must I, sad priest, for ever stand at gaze  
Upon the costly victim all my days,  
And feel thy angry undiverted eyes  
Smile coldly on the futile sacrifice,  
Till its hard glory gathers like disgrace?

Nay, life has little watching to be done,  
And breathless ardours will bring sweeter ease  
Than piping shepherds find below the trees,  
When like a Cyclops noon is with the sun

In his broad forehead. Pain's unselfish scars  
Shall shine through Pity's gloom, bright avatars,  
More softly than when gentle zephyrs sleep,  
And fragrant night is warm and dark and deep,  
And all the level seas are filled with stars.

I was not one of thy great worshippers  
Whose mighty music also was divine :  
My pleasures and sweet pains were only mine ;  
My song had not the sacred touch that stirs  
Woe to the depth of her dark heart with bliss,  
And joy from his bright shallows to the abyss,  
And crushed despair again to gladder strife  
Even to the failure-built success of life,  
And unto something nobler proud success.

Therefore, adieu, kind Goddess ! I would shake  
Thy lovely languors from me like a slough,  
And leave thy flowerful meadows for the rough,  
Bleak, roaring, barren mountain-paths, and take  
For music the strong sounds that life can send  
Melodious through love's instruments, and bend  
My heart to breaking like Ulysses' bow  
That none but my own soul can handle so,  
And like his arrow my strong purpose send.

So let the slaughtered victim lie unknown,  
Unvalued, unconsumèd, unbewailed,  
Forgotten, a proud sacrifice that failed  
Like Cain's—since life, offended, would not own  
The selfish offering—for time to strew.  
Love looks not in as Pride was wont to do,  
And minds not whether he be there or gone.  
Wherefore, my worship is to Love alone,  
And unto thee, kind Goddess, my adieu.

B. H. BLACKWELL'S  
LIST OF POETRY



A DVENTURERS ALL.—A SERIES OF YOUNG  
POETS UNKNOWN TO FAME.  UNIFORM VOLUMES  
IN DOLPHIN OLD STYLE TYPE. CROWN 8VO. ART  
WRAPPERS. 2S. NET EACH.

- I. THE ESCAPED PRINCESS, AND OTHER POEMS.  
By WILFRID ROWLAND CHILDE.
- II. THURSDAY'S CHILD. By ELIZABETH RENDALL.
- III. BOHEMIAN GLASS. By ESTHER LILIAN DUFF.
- IV. CONTACTS, AND OTHER POEMS. By T. W. EARP.
- V. THE IRON AGE. By FRANK BETTS. With an Introduction by GILBERT MURRAY.
- VI. THE TWO WORLDS. By SHERARD VINES.
- VII. THE BURNING WHEEL. By ALDOUS HUXLEY.
- VIII. A VAGABOND'S WALLET. By STEPHEN REIDHEYMAN.
- IX. OP. I. By DOROTHY L. SAYERS.

 Others to follow.

 The object of this Series is to remove from the work of young poets the reproach of insolvency.  The Series is confined to such work as would seem to deserve publicity.  It is hoped that these Adventurers may justly claim the attention of those intellects which, in resisting the enervating influence of the novel, look for something of permanent value in the more arduous pursuit of poetry.

*FIRST PRESS OPINIONS OF THIS SERIES*

“A service to literature.”—*The Nation*.

“Beautiful little books . . . containing poetry, real poetry.”—*The New Witness*.

“Without doubt the inauguration of the Series promises well.”—*The Literary World*.

“The get up of this Series is very attractive. Type, paper, and the shape of the pages are all good, and the poems are printed with a nice regard for margins.”—*The Observer*.



OXFORD: B. H. BLACKWELL, BROAD STREET

## FROM B. H. BLACKWELL'S LIST

### HON. MAURICE BARING

"Among modern devotees of the romantic drama, few have so graceful a touch as Mr. Maurice Baring. He writes clearly, vividly, straightforwardly."—*THE DAILY MAIL.*

**Proserpine.** A Masque in three Acts. Crown 8vo, sewed, 1s. net.

**Mahasena.** A Play in three Acts. Crown 8vo, sewed, 1s. net.

**Gaston de Foix.** A Play in three Acts. Crown 8vo, sewed, 2s. net.

**Palamon and Arcite.** A Play for Puppets. Crown 8vo, sewed, 2s. net.

**Poems and Sonnets.** 8vo, sewed, 2s. net.

"Mr. Maurice Baring is one of the most accomplished of the younger living poets."—*The Daily News.*



### AUBREY F. G. BELL

**Studies in Portuguese Literature.** Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s. net.

**Poems from the Portuguese.** (With the Portuguese Text.) Translated in Verse. Fcap. 8vo, buckram, 3s. 6d. net.

**Lyrics of Gil Vicente.** (With the original Text.) Translated in Verse. Fcap. 8vo, art boards, 3s. 6d. net. [This is the first collected edition of Gil Vicente's lyrics.]

"Excellent volumes. . . . Mr. Aubrey Bell, who combines an intimate knowledge of Portugal with a delicate sense of literary values, gives us, by a combination of criticism and translation, a better chance than has been offered to English readers before of comprehending the imaginative life of the Portuguese."—*The Morning Post.*

"A debt is due to the author for bringing before the English literary public poetry of such purity and grace, sweet with the breath of true lyric."—*The Glasgow Herald.*



### WILFRID BLAIR ("Pembie")

*Author of "Poets on the Isis."*

**Sa Muse S'Amuse.** Crown 8vo, art boards, canvas back, 3s. 6d. net.

" . . . On a plane by itself. In a day when much good humorous verse is written, Mr. Blair need fear few rivals."—*The Spectator.*

"The best book of humorous verse we have seen for a long while."—*The Daily News and Leader.*

## FROM B. H. BLACKWELL'S LIST

### JANE BARLOW

*Author of "The Mockers," "Irish Ways," etc.*

**Between Doubting and Daring.** Imperial 16mo,  
sewed, 1s. net. [Now Ready.]



### ROBERT BRIDGES

(Poet Laureate)

**The Yattendon Hymnal.** Edited by ROBERT BRIDGES  
and H. ELLIS WOOLDRIDGE. Music, Words, and Appendix  
containing Expository Notes on the Hymns. Demy 4to, boards,  
raised to 30s. net. (Original price £1.)

**The Small Hymn Book.** The Word Book of the  
Yattendon Hymnal. 16mo, sewed, 2s. 6d. net.

"It is no exaggeration—it is the bare, literal truth—to say that it is incomparably the finest collection of hymns that has ever yet been published."—*The New Witness*.



### ARTHUR SHEARLY CRIPPS

"The little books that Mr. Arthur Shearly Cripps writes about South Africa are certainly among the best literary productions from that country."—*THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN*.

**Lyra Evangelistica.** Missionary Verses in Mashonaland.  
Third Edition, fcap. 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6d. net.

**Pilgrimage of Grace.** Verses on a Mission. Fcap. 8vo,  
cloth, 2s. 6d. net.

**Pilgrim's Joy.** Fcap. 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6d. net. [Now Ready.]

"A NEW POET"

"In Mr. Arthur Cripps we have a poet of a wild land who will not consent for one moment to forget the classic tradition. He has the keenest and freshest powers of observation, he can catch a strange atmosphere, and be sensible to all the subtleties of virgin soil. But at heart he is a classic. . . . Mashonaland is to him authentic Arcady, and with a poet's eye he can read in its savagery the old songs of Hellas. . . . But he is best, perhaps, in his short pieces, cut like a jewel, for which the true model is the epigrams of the Greek Anthology."—*The Spectator*.

## FROM B. H. BLACKWELL'S LIST

### A. P. HERBERT, R.N.V.R.

*Author of "Play Hours with Pegasus"*

**Half Hours at Helles.** Verses contributed to *Punch* from Gallipoli. Crown 8vo, sewed, 1s. net.

"One of the cleverest and happiest books of verse inspired by the War."—*The Daily Express*.



### M. COMPTON MACKENZIE

*Author of "Carnival" and "Sinister Street"*

**Poems.** Demy 8vo, on Dutch hand-made paper, sewed, 3s. 6d. net.

"Rash is the critic who announces that a new poet has arisen, still more rash he who denies to the young aspirant any leaves of the crown which he covets. We shall err—if error it be—rather with the first than with the second. We believe that in the poems before us—issued in quiet, sober guise from an Oxford press—there are real signs of feeling, of power, even of true inspiration."—*The Guardian*.



### E. H. W. M.

**The Door.** Poems. Imperial 16mo, sewed, 1s. net.

"The poetry of diablerie is a realm into which modern poets rarely stray. . . . The . . . poems by 'E. H. W. M.' have caught something of the mingled earthliness and unearthliness of true witchcraft. . . . Such effects as these demand a cunning art. 'E. H. W. M.'s' fancies grip the imagination because of their homely realism and the hint of immeasurable depths beyond."—*The Spectator*.

**Symphonies.** Crown 8vo, sewed, 2s. net.

"Distinctly in a new style . . . really original . . . full of thought and full of clever and 'exquisite' language."—SIR HERBERT WARREN.



**Oxford Poetry, 1910-1913.** Edited by G. D. H. C.,

G. P. D., and W. S. V. With an Introduction by GILBERT MURRAY. Crown 8vo, boards extra, cloth back, 3s. 6d. net.

[Second Impression.]

"The reader is presented at once with a book of poems of high achievement and higher promise, and with a nearly perfect criticism of them."—*The Sheffield Daily Telegraph*.

## FROM B. H. BLACKWELL'S LIST

**Oxford Poetry, 1914.** Edited by G. D. H. C. and W. S. V. With a Preface by Sir WALTER RALEIGH. Crown 8vo, boards, 2s. 6d. net; paper, 1s. net. [Second Impression.]

"One does not know what to select for praise where almost all is good. All we wish to do is to recommend readers to order the book at once."—*The New Age*.



**Oxford Poetry, 1915.** Edited by G. D. H. C. and T. W. E. Uniform with the above, boards, 2s. 6d. net; paper, 1s. net.

*First impression, December 1915.*

*Second Impression, January 1916.*

*Third Impression, August 1916.*



**Oxford Poetry, 1916.** Uniform with the above, 2s. 6d. net and 1s. net. [Now Ready.]



### R. C. RUSSELL

(Late Agent-General for Natal)

**The Old and Young Lands.** With an Introduction by Sir HERBERT WARREN. Crown 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6d. net. [Now Ready.]

Verse contributed for many years to various London and Colonial papers, and touching on many themes from Imperial to frivolous.



### A. G. SHIRREFF, I.C.S.

**The Tale of Florentius, and other Poems.** With 3 Illustrations by ELSIE LUNN. Fcap. 8vo, sewed, 1s. 6d. net.

**The Dilettante, and other Poems.** Fcap. 8vo, sewed, 1s. 6d. net.

"Metres and forms are Mr. Shirreff's playthings. Mr. Shirreff likes playing with metres because he is a stylist; and there are two sides to a stylist. Mr. Shirreff has both. He has a way of saying things that never lacks distinction. . . . Epigrammatist, imitator, translator, contortionist in rhyme and word, he is also a poet."—*The Times*.



©, Complete List post free on application

OXFORD: B. H. BLACKWELL, BROAD STREET



18  
22/5  
E/3 8

**THE LIBRARY  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
Santa Barbara**

---

**THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE  
STAMPED BELOW.**

---

3 1205 02126 7180

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A A 001 431 029 6

